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THE TIMES

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Pound bounces back as Bundesbank cuts rate

The Bundesbank cut German interest rates in a surprise move to relieve strains in the Exchange Rate Mechanism. The Chancellor, while welcoming the cut, said it should have been done sooner.

By Philip Webster and Janet Bush

A LONG-AWAITED cut in German interest rates yesterday presented Norman Lamont with a breathing space and lifted the pressure on the battered pound.

The decision by the Bundesbank compromised its domestic priorities in an effort to save the exchange-rate mechanism, where pressure on the weakest currencies had become unsustainable. The central bank's policy-making council announced a cut of 0.5 percentage points in Germany's Lombard rate and a cut of 0.25 in its discount rate.

It is the third time in recent months that the Bundesbank has cut interest rates, despite its worries about domestic inflation, because of the demands of its European partners. Sterling had risen

intense pressure on the Danish krone, which had been pinned to the floor of its permitted range in the ERM, despite co-ordinated intervention in its support by other European central banks. By Wednesday the situation had become critical, with Danish reserves chronically depleted and stronger currencies becoming destabilised by the effects of the support operation.

The Bundesbank made clear that it had cut rates because of pressure within the currency system. Helmut Schlesinger, its president, said he hoped that attacks on the system would now stop. He described the waves of speculation that intermittently threaten to engulf the ERM as "an unfriendly domino game in which speculators knock down one currency after the next".

Jonathan Wilmut, chief strategist at Credit Suisse First Boston, said: "It is pretty clear that the system would not have survived another week. The Bundesbank has been moved by enormous political pressure, even down to intense lobbying of individual council members, to be good Europeans."

The rate cuts provided some relief for ERM members, with the franc rallying and the krone rising comfortably above its ERM floor. Austria, Belgium and Holland all cut interest rates.

However, the news from Frankfurt failed to lift the question mark over Mr Lamont's long-term future. With his Chancellor sitting beside him during question time in the Commons, Mr Major sidestepped a question over whether Mr Lamont would deliver this year's second Budget in December. In reply to Sam Galbraith (Lab, Strathkelvin and Bearsden), he said: "I can't imagine anyone other than the Chancellor of the Exchequer presenting a Budget."

Mr Lamont had earlier won backing from senior Tories who told ministers to stop "badmouthing" him. David Howell, chairman of the Commons foreign affairs select committee, said in his constituency in Guildford: "It is all very well for armchair columnists and City analysts to carp and stab when they have no conception of how difficult the job really is. But those Conservatives, including, so we are told, even some ministers, who are currently badmouthing the Chancellor, ought to be deeply ashamed of themselves."

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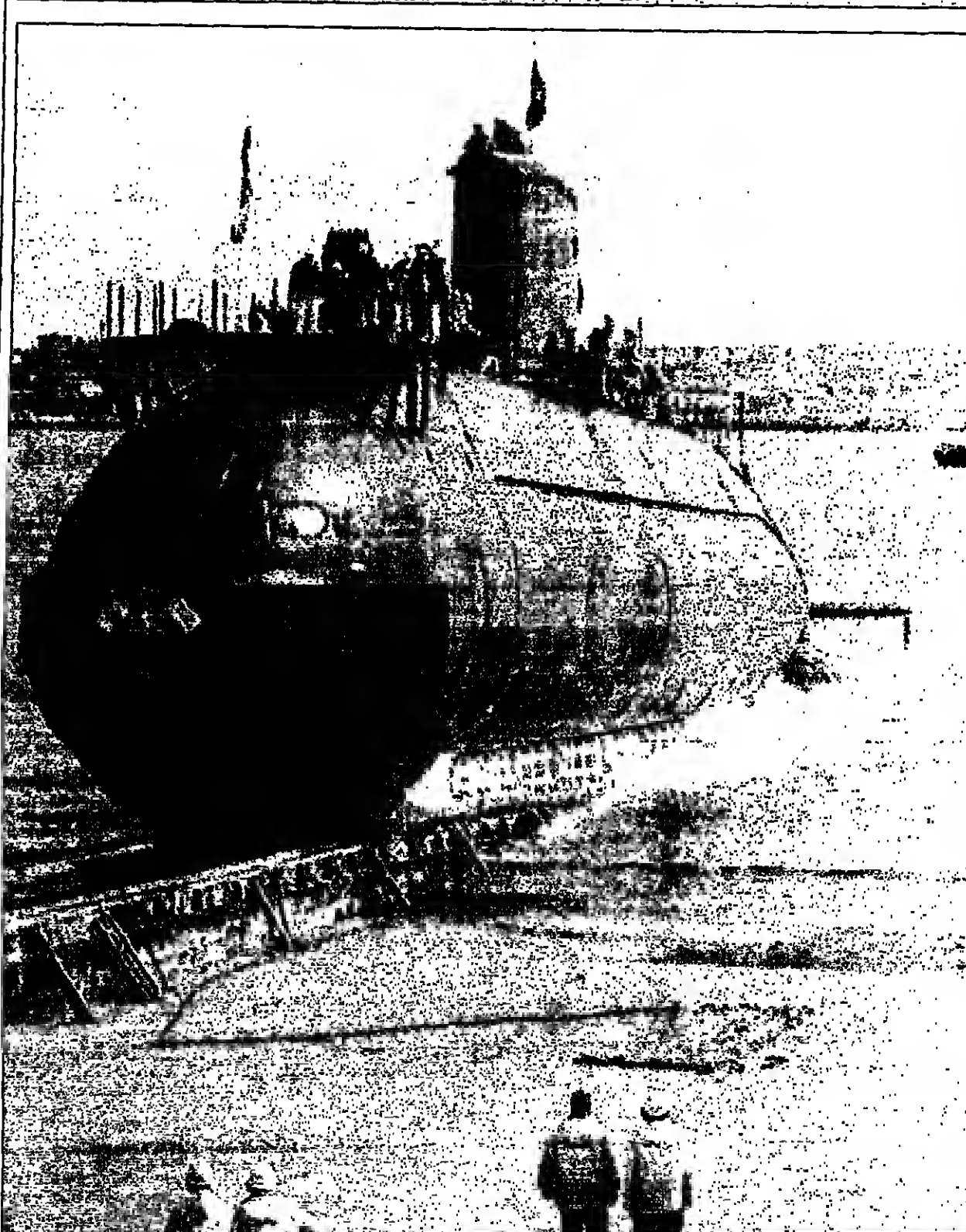


strongly even before the news and closed about three pence higher against the mark at DM2.3921 after recording all-time lows throughout the week.

Mr Lamont said that the rate cut was "something that I think should have taken place somewhat earlier". The Chancellor has long pressed for movement from the Bundesbank and believes that its steadfast refusal to cut its rates has been the main cause of the government's economic troubles. In a clear attempt to prevent renewed market speculation that British interest rates will fall further in the wake of the German cut, he said that he was ready to defend the pound, if necessary by raising interest rates.

The Bundesbank announcement came after a week of

FOUR BRAND-NEW SUBMARINES FACE THE AXE



On the slide: the launch of HMS Unicorn, the last ship to be built at Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead

More cuts needed to hit MoD target

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

FOUR brand-new £500 million diesel-powered submarines, three of them not yet in service with the Royal Navy, could be scrapped or sold under controversial proposals now before ministers.

The recommendation to eliminate conventional-powered submarines and to rely solely on nuclear-powered boats has been made as part of a wide-ranging cost-cutting exercise at the Ministry of Defence. Ministers have been forced to accept that the equipment and manpower cuts envisaged under Options for Change do not go far enough. Ministry sources admit there is not enough money

to pay for even the slimmed down version of the three services.

The demand by the Chancellor in his Autumn Statement for cuts in the defence budget of £1.05 billion in the next two years and Wednesday's announcement relieving two infantry battalions at a cost of £50 million a year have combined to make the dilemma even worse.

Scrapping new submarines would be unprecedented. The four Upholder class submarines were to have been the only conventionally-powered boats left under Options. There will also be 12 nuclear-

powered boats and four Trident ballistic missile submarines. Only three of the older generation Oberon class conventional submarines remain in service and all are due to be scrapped under Options. Ministers now have to decide what to do with the Upholder class boats. They could try to sell them, but customers would be limited to Nato and possibly Commonwealth allies.

With demands for short and long-term cuts, ministry officials have recommended Continued on page 2, col 5

Diary, page 14

Tony Bland to be allowed to die after law lords' ruling

By Richard Ford and Paul Wilkinson

TONY Bland, the Hillsborough disaster victim, is to be allowed to die peacefully after yesterday's law lords' ruling that doctors can stop feeding him.

As the law lords urged Parliament to tackle the legal and moral issues raised by right-to-die cases, doctors caring for Mr Bland said he would not starve to death but would "slip away peacefully" as a result of renal failure or possibly infection.

His parents described the decision as a great relief, especially as it had been unanimous. "The decision is in the best interests of everyone. Not just in the best interests of our family, but for the nursing staff who have cared for Tony and for Tony himself," Mr Bland said in a statement to the *News of the World*.

The doctors caring for their son at the Airedale general hospital in Keighley, West Yorkshire, will decide within the next few days when to stop feeding him. They expect him to die seven to ten days after feeding ends.

Dr Jim Howe, the consultant in charge of his care, said he was relieved at the law lords' decision that it would be lawful to allow him to die, because he had realised after six months that medical care could not make him recover. He said: "It is the same as caring for a terminally ill cancer patient. We are helping him to die comfortably and peacefully. Doctors are not in the business of producing immortality."

About 1,000 other people in Britain are in a similar condition, with the cost for caring for them estimated at £20 million a year. Yesterday's decision is expected to lead to requests from relatives of some of those patients to remove their feeding tubes.

Mr Bland, aged 22, has been unconscious since his brain was deprived of oxygen nearly four years ago in the crush that claimed 95 lives at Sheffield Wednesday's Hillsborough ground.

In their judgment, the law lords said they were satisfied that what was proposed by doctors caring for Mr Bland was within the law. They said removing the feeding tube in this case could not be regarded as a positive act causing death.

The judges urged Parliament to review the law because of the problems raised by the ability to sustain life artificially



Tony Bland: victim of Hillsborough disaster

through rapid advances in medical technology. "It seems to me imperative that the moral, social and legal issues raised by this case should be considered by Parliament", Lord Browne-Wilkinson, one of the judges, said.

The ruling was attacked by anti-euthanasia groups. Dr Peggy Norris, chairman of the Alert organisation, affiliated to the international Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, said: "This decision paves the way to medical cleansing of the long-stay wards."

Historic ruling, page 3

RAISED IN THE HIGHLANDS.



QUALITY IN AN AGE OF CHANGE.

Major stands by 'workfare'

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

JOHN Major last night reassured his determination to inject an element of workfare into schemes for the unemployed after plunging Westminster and Whitehall into confusion over the government's plans to tackle rising unemployment.

After morning headlines proclaiming "No work. No dole", early Downing Street briefings suggested that Mr Major was in retreat only hours after suggesting that the unemployed should be "required" to work for their benefits. In an operation that gave every sign of policy-making on the hoof, officials first denied that workfare was on the agenda of two cabinet

committees, then changed their minds later in the day.

Gillian Shepherd, the employment secretary, stayed on after yesterday's cabinet meeting for urgent talks with the prime minister about how to present the new policy. Her friends denied any rift, insisting that she had discussed the speech with Mr Major before he made it.

Labour frontbenchers, backed by union leaders, denounced the proposal as irrelevant, unfair and demeaning. Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, warned the prime minister against condemning the victims of his economic policies to a compulsory ghetto of no wage and no

hope. Some backbench Opposition MPs attacked the idea as little short of slave labour.

As Downing Street officials strongly denied that Mr Major was easing off under pressure, the prime minister came to the Commons to stand by his remarks and pledge that he would not shy away from considering radical options. He told MPs: "My concern is to make sure wherever possible that we keep unemployed people in touch with the world of work."

Rejected scheme, page 4
Diary, page 14
Letters, and Leading article, page 15

US ready to abandon Owen plan for Bosnia

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

OFFICIALS in Washington yesterday said privately that American resistance to the United Nations peace plan for Bosnia had so hardened that it was doubtful that the plan could be realised in anything like its present form.

America would not press the Bosnian Muslims to accept a plan which it considered flawed, a White House source said. Washington would also resist the proposed deployment of thousands of US ground troops as part of a Nato operation to enforce the plan, which prescribes Bosnia's division into ten semi-

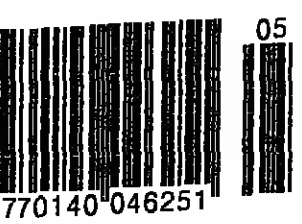
autonomous provinces. Officials predicted that all parties would violate the agreement, and that Nato forces would find themselves in a dangerous, volatile environment.

America's stance threatens to increase tensions with its European allies, who see no alternative to the plan. The administration has been struggling to develop solutions to the conflict, and yesterday promised an announcement within days, but officials have yet to agree among themselves.

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Fighting fear, page 13

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Spot-on questions save Chancellor for another day

Sitting yesterday beside the PM, Norman Lamont knew that he, not his boss, was the target. Labour's Sam Galbraith asked whether the Chancellor would deliver the December budget. Lamont's little Pekinese face looked up at his master, pleading for reassurance.

"I can't imagine anyone but the Chancellor delivering a budget," chorried Major. Resuming his seat, he patted Lamont's knee. It may have been a rather cold, tense knee.

Otherwise, it was "workfare" which dominated questions. Ministers suggested that people who can't find proper jobs, and depend on the state, might be required to place their talents at society's disposal.

Are MPs a good argument for this scheme? They have no proper jobs either. They depend on the state. In return, they place their talents at our disposal.

It might be better if they did not. A workfare scheme for MPs might come as a relief. In return for their salaries, MPs might be asked not to make speeches, issue press releases, defend the value of the pound or engage in active politics of any sort. "Set aside" (under which farmers are paid not to farm) seems to work well in agriculture, and in Milton Keynes they have replaced real cows with concrete ones. We might try a parliamentary set-aside. MPs would be placed under house-arrest and their telephones cut off. If this worked, we might try replacing real politicians with concrete ones.

Take Gary Streeter, for instance — and I take this example because he's actually one of the more capable ones. Streeter has worked hard to become the Conservative MP for Plymouth Sutton, and his Tory association has worked hard to get him elected. His campaign will not have come cheap (raffles and bring-and-buy

sales raised the funds) while the taxpayer paid for the election itself.

Now he works hard as the MP. What with salary, expenses, telephone and postage, the costs of answering MPs' letters and questions, and his share of the expense of running the Palace of Westminster, Mr Streeter probably costs about half a million pounds a year.

On the back, then, of much effort and expense, Gary Streeter is conveyed every week from Plymouth to Westminster.

And what does he do of a Thursday morning? He awakes, puts on a smart suit and a clean white shirt and makes his way into the Commons. After lunch, he attends prayers in the chamber and waits for the arrival of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The country's in a mess, confusion reigns as to work, confusion reigns as to economic policy and ministers must be held to account. The Chancellor's thinking must be probed. There is a question, an important question, which Mr Lamont must face.

And face it he will, for Miss Boothroyd allows the backbencher to catch her eye. "Mr Streeter!" she calls. He gets up. Now is his moment.

"Does my right honourable friend agree that the government's task is to put in place the right conditions for economic growth, and does he agree that that is what he has done?"

"My honourable friend is spot on," replies Mr Lamont. This is what all that effort and expense was for. This is the end result of a backbencher's expensive education and long political training. This is the final product. And I don't mean to single Mr Streeter out. He was only obeying orders.

The average MP asks about three oral questions a year. One down, Gary, two to go.

King ready to resign today in the wake of Branson affair

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

LORD King of Warrnaby, chairman of British Airways, will today tell his fellow board members that he is prepared to resign to end the most damaging and costly episode in the airline's history.

Since Richard Branson's Virgin airline won £610,000 in libel damages after allegations of "dirty tricks" by BA, Lord King, 75, has been under intense pressure to step down to show that BA is prepared to change its operating method and its public image.

In what is certain to be an emotional board meeting at the airline's central London headquarters, Lord King will recommend that Sir Colin Marshall, BA's chief executive, be appointed chairman and that Robert Ayling, the commercial and operations director, become managing director. However, some major shareholders have told the company that they have strong doubts about the wisdom of appointing Sir Colin to the role of both chairman and chief executive. Last week they told Mr Derek Stevens, BA finance director, that there was a "need for checks and

balances on the board". Despite earlier objections to the changes raised by some members of the ten-man board, it is now likely that Lord King's resignation will be accepted unanimously. He will probably be asked to become president for life.

The board is also likely to be told that David Burnside, the director of public affairs, will be leaving at the same time as Lord King, with whom he has formed a close working relationship. Sir Colin last week held a one-and-a-half hour

meeting with Mr Branson to make it clear that the dispute with Virgin is at an end.

BA is keen to put the episode behind it and restore its international reputation at a time when it is pursuing its ambition to become a global airline. It is trying to establish a partnership with US Air, the sixth largest carrier in America, which would be further damaged if Mr Branson took any more legal action. The "big three" US airlines — American, Delta and United — oppose any deal and are asking the Clinton administration to declare a moratorium on foreign investments in American carriers.

Lord King is said by those close to him to be "shattered" by the events of the past few weeks. They have marred the end of an 11-year tenure which saw him turn the airline round from a massive state-owned loss maker into the world's most profitable.

He had, anyway, been planning to retire in July, but the affair and increasing pressure from city institutions and commentators have forced him to advance his plans.



Lord King emotional board meeting likely

Straw calls for Scandinavian style constitutional monarchy

By A Staff Reporter

THE royal family was "deeply shocked", Jack Straw, the shadow environment secretary, said yesterday.

Mr Straw provoked a rebuff from Buckingham Palace last month when he compared royalty to a soap opera with no serious future, adding that Britain could become a republic unless the royal family changed its ways. The Labour party said then Mr Straw was expressing a personal view.

Yesterday he returned to the subject by telling the left-wing newspaper *Tribune* that he formed a view that Britain needed a Scandinavian-style constitutional monarchy after reading Andrew Morton's book *Diana: Her True Story*.

"It hadn't occurred to me before that the royals were at the apex of a separate society of extremely rich people," he told the newspaper.

Claiming that he had received as many supportive letters as critical ones since he spoke about the royal family last month, he added that the biography of the Princess of Wales was a "remarkably subversive document that exposes a deeply decadent and detached system for which we are all paying".

Mr Straw's latest intervention came a day after John Major said that some of Britain's deepest values, including the monarchy, were being undermined. He told a

Tory audience at London's Carlton Club that he sensed "a growing fear that we may lose so much that is precious to this country", emphasising a need for an "unbroken chain of community linking the monarchy to the humblest household".

An unnamed middle-aged man placed bets totalling £3,000 at two branches of William Hill in north London yesterday on the monarchy being abolished by January 1, 2000. The man, who will pick up £146,000, including stake money, if the monarchy has ceased to exist by then, took out bets of £1,000 at 33-1, £3,500 at 20-1 and a further £3,500 at 10-1.

Major rules out cash for truck firm

By Philip Webster
Chief Political Correspondent

JOHN Major yesterday ruled out government financial help for Leyland DAF trucks.

In an altercation with John Smith, the Labour leader, he said he was not prepared to spend taxpayers' money to provide working capital to companies suffering difficulties. Many needed working capital from time to time and it was not realistic to expect the government to provide it.

Mr Smith had said the company could be saved as "a commercially viable business, without unnecessary state handouts. I believe that is the way to proceed."

Pressed again by the Labour leader, Mr Major said Mr Smith was asking to try the failed approach of Labour governments.

Diary, page 14
Lone light, and Anthony Harris, page 19



Recovering the former hunter George Girl with its owner, Kate Buckett

Pregnant horse is attacked

By Lin Jenkins

A BROOD mare due to foal in two months has become the latest victim in a series of sexual attacks on horses in southern England during the past 18 months.

George Girl, a 16-hand former hunter, was grazing in a field with another horse at Upham, near Fareham, Hampshire, when it was assaulted. Police working on Operation Mountbatten, named after a horse that died during an attack, have added the incident to 27 others in the county under investigation.

The mare was found bleeding by its groom, Carol Alford, when she went to feed the horses. Kate Buckett, its owner, said: "She noticed George was bleeding from her hindquarters and her first reaction was that she was going to miscarry. She could not see evidence of any cut. It was only when the vet came that he found she had internal wounds and he was convinced it was something she could not have done to herself."

Mrs Buckett, 38, said she was appalled by the crime. "I felt absolutely devastated. It is just disgusting. I cannot believe someone could be this deviant."

The mare had been in the field for four days. Mrs Buckett thought the field, overlooked by cottages, would be safe. "You would find it hard to find a safer place to keep your horses."

Hampshire police said the attack was of a sexual nature and was probably carried out in daylight on Wednesday, when there was fog. They want to interview a man and woman seen in a black BMW in the area. The 12-strong Operation Mountbatten team, based at Alton, has issued descriptions of two different people in relation to earlier attacks.

Student kills himself with electrocution kit

A Cambridge University student who was a member of the Footlights theatre group killed himself with a home-made time lapse electrocution kit, an inquest was told yesterday.

Sam Butterell, 20, using the expertise he learnt as a lighting technician with the Footlights, attached live and neutral wires to his chest and plugged them into a wall socket via a battery timer before going to sleep on November 25 last year. His body was found at 11pm the next day after he failed to appear for a performance of the Footlights pantomime, *Peter Pan*. The timer had been set for 15 hours earlier at 8am.

The Queen's College philosophy student from Barnard Castle, co. Durham, was said by a psychiatrist to be exhausted from his work with the theatre group and worried about his studying and meagre student grant. Dr Jeanne Arno, a consultant pathologist, said he died from acute heart failure consistent with electrocution. John Smith, the Cambridge coroner, recorded an open verdict.

Drinkers disciplined

Employers are adopting a stricter attitude toward alcohol at work, according to a study by Alcohol Concern. Of 81 organisations surveyed, two out of five had dismissed employees for being drunk on company premises or for similar offences. Almost three-quarters disciplined problem drinkers who refused counselling.

Gallery wins award

The architect Sir Norman Foster achieved a rare double last night when his new Sackler Galleries at the Royal Academy, London, were named 1992 Building of the Year by the Royal Institute of British Architects. The galleries have already received the Royal Fine Art Commission/Sunday Times Building of the Year Award for 1992.

IRA admits rail bombs

The IRA yesterday said that it planted the two bombs which disrupted rail services in London on Wednesday. It also threatened further attacks in Britain. The first explosion was on the 9.49am Victoria to Ramsgate train at Kent House station, south London. The second was at 3.29pm at South Kensington underground station, west London.

Woman shoots herself

A businesswoman has killed herself with a gunshot to her head. Christine Nasr, of East Sheen, Surrey, separated and with a daughter aged six, had earlier telephoned a relative and threatened to commit suicide, police said yesterday. Her body was found at her home on Wednesday. She ran a boutique in central London.

Four brand-new submarines face the axe

Continued from page 1

equipment cancellations because they provide instant savings. If Malcolm Rifkind, the defence secretary, approves the cuts, the government's promise to create "smaller but better" armed forces for the 1990s could be put in doubt.

As if to counter the criticism that will come from Conservative backbenchers, the defence ministry yesterday announced that the army is to get a new attack helicopter which could cost £2 billion. However, the recommended cuts in equipment arising from the ministry's annual long-term costings exercise, recently completed, will have such an impact on the defence procurement programme that the three services are now bracing themselves for some harsh decisions by ministers later this year.

Elimination of the four Upholder class submarines which were built for £500

million would remove a capability which has always been viewed as vital in the past. Although the navy would prefer to keep nuclear boats because of their long endurance capability, the quieter diesel-powered submarines can operate in shallow waters.

HMS Upholder, the first of the class, was launched in December 1990 and came into service the same year. HMS Unseen and HMS Ursula, built at Cammel Laird, were handed over to the navy last year. The fourth, HMS Unicorn, also built at Cammel Laird, is due to go on sea trials in the next few weeks.

Other cuts being considered by ministers cover a whole range of equipment for the three services. The RAF could lose a Tornado F3 squadron but the future of the European Fighter Aircraft seems assured. The navy's Trident submarine programme is also immune from cuts but

the number of frigates and destroyers could drop from the *Options* target of "around 40" to 35. Several minesweepers could also go. The three aircraft carriers are unlikely to be affected, although the proposed £170 million helicopter carrier for the Royal Marines seems doomed.

Atomic contract: An Anglo-American consortium has won the contract to run the atomic weapons establishments, following the government's decision to hand management of the sites to private contractors. The consortium, consisting of Hunting, a British defence company, Brown and Root, a subsidiary of a Texas conglomerate, and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, will manage the sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield in Berkshire, at Foulness in Essex, and Cardiff from April 1.

Diary, page 14

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Historic ruling will allow Hillsborough victim to die but similar cases must still go to the courts

Doctors given right to end living death

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

DOCTORS caring for Tony Bland, victim of the Hillsborough disaster, can stop feeding him and allow him to die, the House of Lords ruled yesterday in an historic judgment.

The five law lords unanimously upheld the Court of Appeal's ruling that it would be lawful for medical staff to stop feeding Mr Bland, although Lord Mustill expressed profound misgivings about almost every aspect of the case. They said that, for the foreseeable future, all other such cases would have to come to the courts before doctors could act.

The judges, giving the first right-to-die judgment, said Mr Bland would not benefit from having his life prolonged as his condition was no more than a living death, and that further treatment would be futile. But they said there was a crucial distinction between withdrawing supportive treatment that kept a patient alive and taking positive action, such as administering a lethal injection, with the intention of ending life. The latter remained murder.

In delivering their judgment, they acknowledged that Mr Bland's life had been sustained only by the dedication of medical staff at Airedale general hospital near

In the ruling on Tony Bland, a crucial distinction was made between withdrawing treatment and actively ending a life

Keighley, West Yorkshire. Mr Bland's parents, Barbara and Allan, supported the doctors' view that nothing could be done for their son, who was condemned to a persistent vegetative state when he was crushed during an FA cup semi-final at Sheffield Wednesday's ground in April 1989. Ninety-five people died.

The distress of his parents was acknowledged by Lord Mustill, who referred to the "pitiful state" of Mr Bland since he suffered the severe chest injury that led to brain damage.

The period leading up to his death would be very stressful for nursing staff, who would have to act in a way contrary to all their instincts and training, Lord Mustill said. "Acknowledging this, I hope that the nurses will accept, as I believe, that sadly it is for the best."

He and Lords Keith of Kinkel, Goff of Chieveley, Lowry and Browne-Wilkinson dismissed the appeal by David Venables, the Official Solicitor, who was representing Mr Bland's interests. He had opposed the application by Airedale NHS Trust, supported by Mr Bland's parents, to stop feeding the soccer fan. Mr

Venables argued that for a doctor to bring about the death of a patient by deliberately depriving him of food would amount to murder.

The key issue was whether the tube-feeding ought to be considered a medical treatment. Lord Goff said consideration must be taken of the whole regime, including the artificial feeding, which kept Mr Bland alive.

"That regime amounts to medical treatment and care, and it is incorrect to direct attention exclusively to the fact that nourishment is provided," he said.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson said that removing the feeding tube could not be regarded as an act causing death. It was reasonable for the doctors to conclude that there was no benefit to Mr Bland in continuing the invasive medical procedures necessary to sustain life. "Having so concluded, they are neither entitled nor under a duty to continue such medical care. Therefore, they will not be guilty of murder if they discontinue such care," he said.

Peaceful end, page 1
Law Report, page 6



Dr Jim Howe, responsible for Tony Bland's treatment, at the hospital yesterday

Judgment affects 1,000 patients

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

AS MANY as 1,000 patients in persistent vegetative state could be affected by the judgment. Doctors said yesterday, however, that there was unlikely to be a flood of requests for relatives for feeding tubes to be removed.

Doctors and carers are divided on the decision. Pro-life groups said that pressure could be brought on relatives by hospitals because of the cost of caring for such patients, estimated at £20 million a year. Tony Bland's care costs £2,100 a week. Keith Davies, of Life, said the ruling was a monstrous legal error that had more to do with economics than medical care. "Tony Bland has been delivered into the jaws of the NHS's cost cutting piranhas," he said.

Dr Keith Andrews, medical director of the Royal Hospital and Home, Putney, southwest London, which specialises in the care of patients in persistent vegetative state, said doctors were too negative about what could be achieved by such patients because few had enough experience and opportunities for rehabilitation were rare. "You have got to give patients the chance to live before you give them the chance to die." The Royal College of Nursing said the time between removing the feeding tube and death, expected to be 10 to 14 days, would be extremely difficult for nurses.

The mother of a 23-year-old man injured in a car accident

six years ago said there had been disagreement among his doctors about whether he was in persistent vegetative state. Anne Rogers said her son James, whom she cares for at home, was completely incapacitated but could communicate through arm movements and the way he looked. "He means a great deal to his family and friends," she said. "I am worried that pressure will be put on other families as a result of this judgment."

American courts have agreed to the withdrawal of food and water in about 80 similar cases. Bryan Jennett, professor of neurosurgery at Glasgow University, said the ruling would be reassuring to British doctors who had been responding to public demands to moderate life-saving measures when the outcome looked poor. He questioned the need for a change in the law, saying it only needed to be clarified.

He said doctors made decisions for the benefit of patients, not economics, but the ruling showed there was no legal duty to provide useless treatment and it would "therefore not be right to demand useless treatment".

The British Medical Association said occasional reports of patients recovering showed the importance of careful diagnosis. The association backs the idea of a card that could be carried by people who did not want to be kept alive if there was no hope of recovery.

Father prepares for last days

By PAUL WILKINSON

TONY Bland's death in the next few days will end a harrowing routine for his parents that has lasted almost four years. Every day, since all normal life was crushed out of him against the Hillsborough terrace rails, Allan and Barbara Bland have visited his bedside in the hope of glimpsing a flicker of recognition in his eyes.

The absence of any such response and the growing knowledge that his physical condition is declining have taken their toll on the couple. Mr Bland is 57 and his wife is 52. Doctors at Airedale hospital in Keighley, West Yorkshire, have recently warned the Blands several times about the enormous strain they have endured because of their son's condition and the long-running court action.

Counselling for families of the 95 victims was concentrated

on Liverpool. Help for the Blands came from a local social worker, but the couple accept that he had enough on his hands dealing with a casebook of 40 juveniles.

Their son was transferred from Sheffield to Airedale hospital to make visiting easy for the Blands, who live four miles away. From the beginning they did anything that might provoke a reaction: talk of the day's events, play his favourite music, and even tune into soccer on the television.

There have been visits from some of the Liverpool players that he idolised, and who played at Hillsborough on the day of the disaster. There have been scores of cards from well-wishers.

Today, autographed shirts from Liverpool, Sheffield Wednesday and the England under-21 side hang at the foot of his bed. The cream walls

are adorned with family pictures. Over his head is a smiling picture of a toddler called Daniel, a nephew he will never see.

His parents still hold his hand and tell news of the family and the outside world, but they have accepted that even when his eyes roll open he can see nothing. When they are not there, nurses regularly attempt conversation: Every two hours they turn his immobile body in the bed, looking for sores or signs of the infections that have twice nearly claimed his life. A constant check is kept on the machine that keeps him alive. A tube through his nose feeds liquid nutrients into his body. Wires monitor numerous bodily functions.

Soon they will stop. Tony Bland does not know it but his father has promised to be there at the end.

Polar duo defy pain barrier and vow to complete trek

By IAN MURRAY

FROST-BITTEN, hungry and lame, the two British explorers striving to be the first to cross Antarctica unsupported are within a week of their goal and determined to press on.

Over the crackling VHF radio that is now their only link with the outside world, Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Dr Michael Stroud said yesterday that they would not give up, even though they are nearing exhaustion and all their equipment is wearing out after 87 days of constant hard use in sub-zero weather. Morag Howell, the expedi-

tion co-ordinator, said yesterday: "It is an amazing feat of human endurance and their pain barriers must be incredibly high to continue."

Speaking from Chile, where she is now waiting anxiously for their journey to end, she said that both men were suffering from malnutrition and were emaciated. Sir Ranulph, 48, had an infected foot caused by a blister turning septic and was suffering from frost-bite in both feet. Dr Stroud, 37, had frost-bitten hands.

"I am sure they would not be going on if they were in danger of dying," said Mrs Howell, who has worked on previous polar expeditions with the two men. She said that in the last two days the antenna on the beacon that gave a positional fix had broken. They were left with the VHF radio and a small homing device, which would help a search party in an emergency.

Dr Stroud's sled broke in two when he fell down a crevasse ten days after the expedition began and it was now held together by rope. They had only two ski poles between them, one without a basket. "Everything is falling apart," Mrs Howell said. "You can imagine what state

their clothes are in after wearing them for three months."

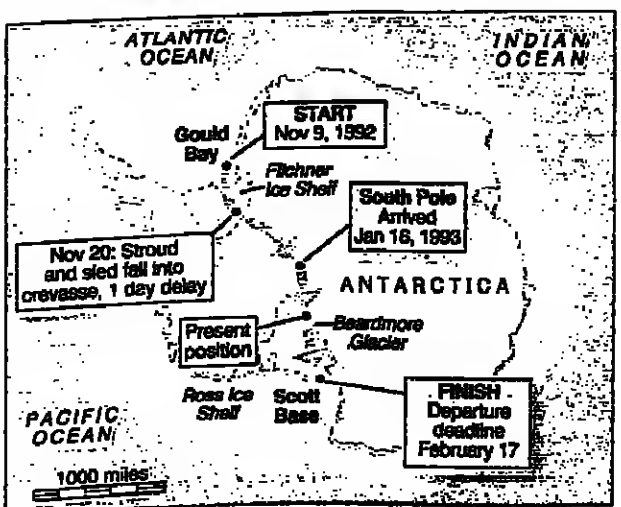
In spite of the difficulties, including winds gusting at 50mph, the pair are averaging 20 miles a day down the blue ice of the Beardmore Glacier on the last, but most difficult, stretch of their 1,300-mile journey.

They are 32 miles from breaking an 86-year record for the longest unsupported polar trip and 80 miles from reaching the bottom of the glacier and completing the first such trans-Antarctic journey. Since they set out on November 9, they have lost only one day of travel, which was after Dr Stroud's sled broke. They stopped off briefly for a cup of tea to celebrate reaching the South Pole.

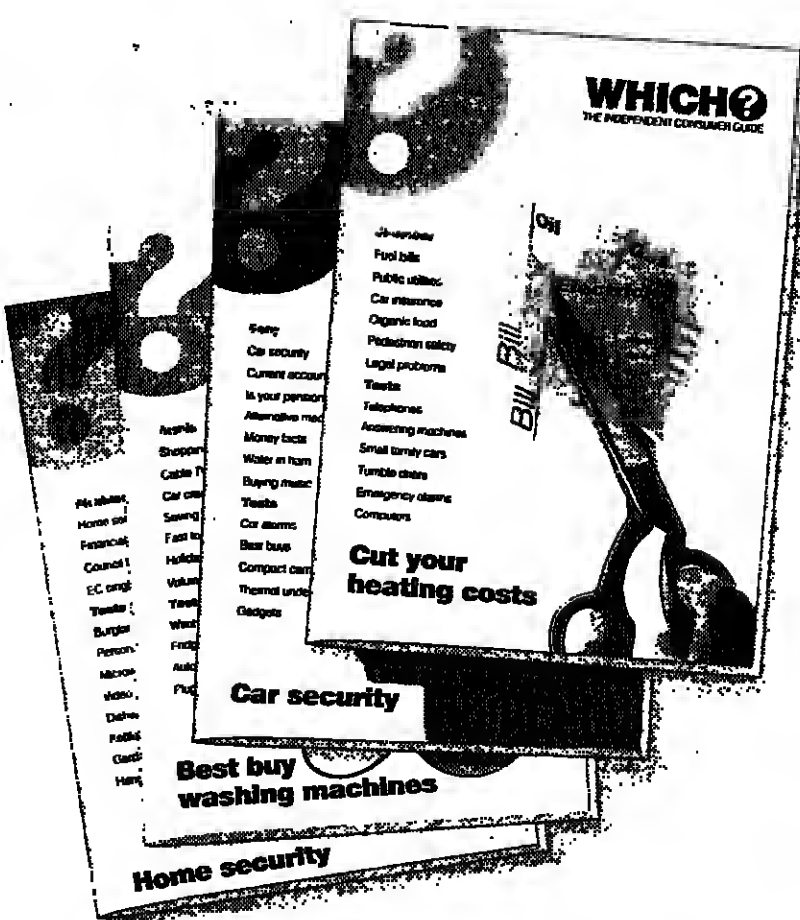
Mrs Howell said the pair had until February 17 to finish the journey, when the last ship had to leave to escape being trapped by ice. Lady Fiennes, who is being kept up to date with progress at her farm in Exmoor, said she was nervous but sure that if the two men became too ill they would stop.

The expedition hopes to raise £2 million for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Photograph, page 18



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WITH THE TIMES TOMORROW

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AND
Clement Freud enjoys David Puttnam's gut feelings

Weekend Times
Down with heritage: the conservation muddle

AND
Lynne Truss on sex and meat

Tories return to scheme rejected under Thatcher

Growth in jobless forces workfare back on agenda

By Philip Bassett
Industrial Editor

JOHN Major's suggestion that the unemployed might work for their benefits has raised an issue that has again been lurking around Whitehall as unemployment heads inexorably towards three million: workfare.

In light of the controversy aroused by the prime minister's speech to the Carlton Club on Wednesday, his aides attempted yesterday to suggest that he had been misinterpreted and had not meant any programme along the lines of American schemes. But his words — "I increasingly wonder whether paying unemployment benefit without offering or requiring any activity in return serves unemployed people or society well" — are the basis of workfare in the United States: that the unemployed carry out community work for their benefit, or do not get any.

The Conservatives have been here before. In the late 1980s, Margaret Thatcher and Nigel Lawson, then prime minister and Chancellor, were in favour of introducing workfare but an alliance of the employment and trade and industry secretaries headed them off. Sir Norman Fowler, then employment secretary, even went gingerly on a trip to America to look at workfare schemes — or at least the soft edge of them, as operated in

The government is backing away from workfare at a time when President Clinton is about to make it one of his key policies

liberal states such as Massachusetts.

What ministers have chosen not to see is the hard edge: the compulsory schemes that illustrate starkly why, politically, "workfare" is a dirty word. In one programme operating in New York's Lower East Side, the unpleasantness is palpable as every hour about 200 people, most of them black, are asked a straight question on working or losing benefit. Depending on their answers, they are headed into chest-high, fenced pens to await their fate. Questioned about the system, they mostly reply in expletives.

The evidence that workfare schemes find people jobs is limited. According to a two-year study by Louis Burghes, a senior researcher with the UK Family Policy Studies Centre, American research showed only small employment gains in workfare states.

President Clinton cites the achievement of Project Success, the workfare scheme he operated as governor of Arkansas, which he claims, at its peak, helped almost 10,000 people to find work in one year. He is expected to name a taskforce next week to reform America's welfare pro-

grammes with workfare as a specific aim. The day before Mr Major's statement, Mr Clinton said that there had to be "a certain time beyond which people don't draw a cheque for doing nothing".

Though Labour politicians and some trade union leaders rallied against Mr Major's suggestion yesterday, this Clinton "tough love", as his advisers call it, is prompting modernisers in the Labour party to consider workfare seriously. In his speeches in Durham this week, Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead, has edged towards it, as has David Blunkett, the front-bench health spokesman.

Proposals from the pressure group Full Employment UK carefully eschew the word "workfare" but talk, Clinton-style, of "reciprocal responsibility". They have been closely examined by employment department officials.

Though proposing workfare in Britain has long been espoused of the political right, Clinton-influenced left-wingers are able to draw on impeccable references to support their interest. The 1942 report by Sir William Beveridge, which was the foundation of the modern welfare

state, never saw indefinite benefit as part of the optimum welfare system and saw a direct connection between work and benefits.

"Men and women in receipt of unemployment benefit cannot be allowed to hold out indefinitely for work of the type to which they are used," he said. "Men and women who have been unemployed for a certain period should be required as a condition of continued benefit to attend a work or training centre."

Sweden, throughout the recent period when it was regarded by many on the British left as a social model, operates a system under which no cash benefits are available to anyone under 20 unless they accept work or training. Switzerland cuts all unemployment benefits after eight months and bans them for anyone under 20.

The Conservative government has rejected workfare before, and may do so again, because its associated problems are real. Though there are no accurate public costings of a British programme, some rough estimates suggest that it could run to £18 billion. At a time when projected public borrowing is running at £44 billion, the Treasury is likely to balk at the cost.

Workfare confusion, page 1
and Diary, page 14
Leading article, page 15



John Sharman, unemployed, of south London, supported workfare yesterday

First test will be far cry from early vision

By Our Industrial Editor

BRITAIN'S first workfare-style scheme is due to be tested later this year in the constituency of the Conservative MP who has long proposed that Britain should adopt workfare.

For more than a decade, Ralph Howell, MP for Norfolk North, has doggedly pursued radical alternatives to unemployment. He will see his persistence pay off when the employment department pilots a version of his workfare proposal, produced under the auspices of the Adam Smith Institute, the right-wing think-tank. The scheme should be in place by April.

Talks on setting up the pilot have been under way for some time between Mr Howell and his supporters, employment department officials and Michael Forsyth, the employment minister, who is understood to be in favour of workfare, though aware of its practical difficulties.

The scheme was originally going to offer work that

TRIAL RUN

would help the local community and develop skills among the 18-24 age group. It will now be available to all unemployment claimants in the area who have been out of work for six months or more, regardless of age. The constituency has 3,157 jobless. The unemployment rate for Norfolk is 8.9 per cent, compared with a national rate of 10.5 per cent.

Supporters of workfare may not see the pilot as a worthwhile test, because it is unlikely to contain any element of compulsion and will pay present benefit levels, plus £10 a week. That is a far cry from Mr Howell's proposals which, in return for the ending of unemployment benefit, offer work for a tax-free wage of £100 for a 40-hour week, with entitlement to housing or family benefit beyond that level. This payment would be higher than the normal unemployment benefit.

Mr Howell's scheme would continue to attract any due sickness and disability benefits, unlike workfare schemes in the United States.

As the prime minister said yesterday, Britain already has some elements of American workfare-style compulsion, principally the Restart programme, under which people unemployed for two years (to be changed in April to one year) are required to go through an interview course. Failure to attend, or leaving early, can lead to a reduction in benefit.



Howell: persistent advocate of workfare

White House tries carrot with the stick

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

WORKFARE has wide support in Congress and the White House, but President Clinton has not so far drafted specific legislation. Instead, he has promised to form a task force within the next few days to prepare a plan to put to Congress within six months.

Mr Clinton wants to ensure that welfare becomes "a second chance, not a way of life". He contends that most of the five million American families on welfare are "aching for the chance to move from dependence to dignity".

He told America's governors this week that, after training, people must be required to take a job in the private sector or in public service, such as community work. "There must be a certain time beyond which people don't draw a cheque for doing nothing when they can do something," he said. Mothers with infants would be excluded.

The Clinton plan includes a carrot with the stick: poor people with jobs will get increased tax credits.

The president's determination to reduce the welfare rolls is in keeping with his campaign promise to be a "new kind of Democrat". Conservatives say his views put him slightly to the right of President Reagan, who tried

to launch a workfare scheme in the 1980s. Left-wing and civil-rights groups worry that the element of compulsion in the plan could force poor people into menial jobs or make-work tasks.

Presidential aides prefer to make comparisons with President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration, which helped to ease unemployment in the Depression.

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST

In favour
People who are able to support themselves should do so.

Workfare tests need, deterring those who really do not need benefit from claiming it. Can reduce welfare costs.

Maintains an attachment to the jobs market. Provides socially useful public work.

Against
Society should support those

who cannot support themselves.

Workfare will impose work which is often inappropriate to individual unemployed people.

Workfare stigmatises people and runs contrary to notions of universal benefit.

Excludes the unemployed by using them as cheap labour, and displaces the employed out of jobs.

Difficult to implement, politically hard to stomach — for any government.

VAT levy 'would shut papers'

By Robin Young

PUTTING value-added tax on newspapers would close a fifth of Britain's regional titles, lead to nearly 2,500 job losses, and raise only half the £135 million the Treasury expects, according to a report published yesterday.

The survey was prepared for the Newspaper Society by Price Waterhouse, the accountants and management consultants, in the knowledge that VAT on books, newspapers and magazines is being considered as one way of reducing the public sector borrowing requirement in the budget.

The Price Waterhouse study, based on data from 255 independently selected titles, is being circulated to MPs as part of the Newspaper Society's campaign against VAT on regional and local newspapers.

Dugald Nisbet-Smith, the director of the Newspaper Society, said yesterday: "The potential damage to newspapers' editorial coverage of local issues would be irreversible. This would be a tax on knowledge, hitting at the heart of the community."

Courts to act against cheap Oxford bars

By John O'Leary, Education Correspondent

MAGISTRATES in Oxford are threatening to clamp down on college bars that give students access to cheap late-night drinking.

The bars are not subject to the same licensing laws as the city's pubs. They operate through an informal arrangement, which has not been revised since 1978.

John Kemp, chairman of the licensing magistrates, said his committee wanted to know why the university was not subject to the same constraints as the rest of the population. Magistrates had to be sure that the colleges' regulations were not contributing to over-indulgence.

Chief Supt David Lindley, head of Oxford police, said: "There isn't the same supervision as at normal licensed premises, and the drink is cheap. Excessive drinking doesn't always cause problems but on Saturday night there are a lot of intoxicated students staggering around in High Street and Cornmarket Street."

He said that the death from a drink and drugs cocktail in 1986 of the cabinet minister's daughter Olivia Channon, a

student at Christ Church, had not been forgotten.

The university has started its own investigation into drinking among students. Colleges are to discuss a report by a working party of the student health committee, which offers guidelines for the running of their bars.

The university said there was concern about the dangers of alcohol, but colleges had firm rules governing bars. Only college members were allowed to buy drinks, and only half opened at lunchtimes, giving the rest shorter opening hours than pubs.

Oriel College has reorganised its bar arrangements, taking the management out of the hands of the junior common room and appointing a professional manager. Students pay for drinks on an account, which allows the college to monitor their consumption.

Alcohol problems among Oxford's youth were aired in a Central Television documentary last night, when the father of a 16-year-old girl who died after a drinking session said his daughter's friends were still at risk.



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Bombers' prison wedding bridges divide in Ulster

By EDWARD GORMAN
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A ROMAN Catholic woman and a Protestant man, both serving life sentences for terrorist murders, are to marry next month in the first prison wedding to bridge the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Office confirmed yesterday that Anna Moore, 46, and Bobby Corry, 43, are to marry at Maghaberry top security jail, co. Antrim. Officials added that serving prisoners had married before, but this was the first time a Protestant and a Catholic had been involved. There were a total of ten weddings involving prisoners in the province last year, only one of which was between serving inmates.

Moore, who is a born-again Christian, was convicted of one of Northern Ireland's worst atrocities: in December 1982, 11 off-duty soldiers and six civilians were killed by a bomb planted by the Irish National Liberation Army at the Droppin' Well pub at Ballykelly, co. Londonderry.

Corry, who is thought formerly to have been associated with the Ulster Volunteer Force, was jailed for a pub



Marriage made in prison: Anna Moore, serving life for the Droppin' Well bombing that killed 17 people, will wed Bobby Corry, another convicted murderer

bombing in 1972 in the centre of Belfast in which one man was killed.

The couple first got to know each other by exchanging letters between the women's

and men's sections of Maghaberry jail. They then met, using relatives' visiting days to see each other.

The wedding, expected to take place in the prison cha-

pel, may be conducted by an outside priest. They will be allowed between eight and ten guests and there will be a short reception afterwards, but no honeymoon. A photog-

rapher will be allowed to record the event and a cake, sausage rolls and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided.

The couple will not be allowed any conjugal rela-

tions while in prison and will remain in separate sections of the jail. They will rely on weekly visits to see each other.

Given the nature of her crime, Moore can expect to

remain in prison for many more years. Corry, too, cannot expect to be released for some years, having been sentenced for the 1972 bombing only in 1986.

NEWS IN BRIEF

IRA attack injures civilian

The IRA said it used a new type of bomb in an attack on a police and army base at Crossmaglen yesterday that injured a civilian worker.

The heavily fortified base was badly damaged by the blast, caused by a mortar fired from a tractor and trailer outside the perimeter fence.

The injured man was flown to hospital and treated for abdominal injuries. A bomb disposal expert was later examining what was believed to be an unexploded mortar inside the base.

Husband-killer can appeal

A woman who admitted strangling her brutal husband and burying his body under their patio won permission to appeal against her 30-month jail sentence for manslaughter.

Jill Stubbs, 32, of Bendy West Midlands, remarried after telling friends that Michael Devaughn had left her. She recently gave birth in prison but was refused bail pending the appeal hearing.

Horses starved

Six horses had to be destroyed after RSPCA officers found conditions like "an animal Belsen" on a farm at Leintwardine, Hereford and Worcester. More than 100 animals have been placed in care and prosecutions are likely against the owners.

Girl exhumed

Police are to take no further action after exhuming the body of Kerthys Coomber, 5, from Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan. She was thought to have died of natural causes, but the grave was reopened six days after her death on January 11 when police were tipped off.

Welsh honour

A businessman from South Wales who left school at 15 with no qualifications has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Wales. Alf Gooding, who studied at night school, sold his first engineering company for £1.5 million.

Stamp error

A faulty block of stamps bought at a post office in Hastings, East Sussex, for £5.60 in December sold for £23,100 at Phillips in London yesterday. They were printed with 26p instead of 28p.

Painful exit

A Nigerian traveller broke both his legs when he jumped 25ft from a second-floor window at Southampton airport after being interviewed by immigration officers.

Police damages

PC Nigel Hart, 37, who injured his hand while pretending to be a burglar during training, has won £3,250 damages from the chief constable of Hampshire.

Airport deaths

The bodies of a man and woman were discovered in a car at Stansted airport, Essex. A gun was found and police are not seeking anyone in connection with the deaths.

Time and tide

A woman in Le Havre, Normandy, has replied to a message in a bottle thrown from a cross-Channel ferry ten years ago by Charlotte Denham, 20, of Plymouth.

Body found in peat shipment

By OUR IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

FRENCH and Irish police are trying to identify the body of a man found half-naked in a container-load of peat exported from Ireland to France.

The body was discovered on Wednesday when cargo staff at a freight depot at Rouen began unloading the peat. The dead man, thought to be in his thirties, was naked from the waist up. He had no identification on him and is thought to have been lying in the 40ft by 9ft container for almost two weeks.

Irish police are checking missing persons lists to try to discover the man's identity. One theory was that he may have been a tramp who sought shelter in the container before it was sealed for export.

"We are keeping an open mind at the moment, but he may have tried to light some of the peat for warmth and have been overcome by fumes," a senior officer said.

The investigation is centring on the town of Kilkenny, south of Dublin, where the peat was originally loaded in bails into the container.

It was then taken by road to Waterford port, where a security seal was put in place before it was shipped by Bell Lines to Le Havre on January 24. It was taken on by road to Rouen, where it stood in a field until being unlocked on Wednesday.

A worker at Waterford port, who did not wish to be named, said yesterday that he was shocked at the discovery. "It isn't nice to think there was someone in that container all that time," he told a local journalist.

"Maybe he was dead soon after he went in there, or maybe he broke in to go to sleep, no one knows. There is a certain amount of air in those containers, but not much."

The worker added that he and his colleagues were fairly sure that, if the man had been alive when the container reached Waterford port, they would have heard him banging for help. "But no one heard anything."

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The way it isn't

CRAIG BROWN



"THANK You For Not Smoking," read the notice in the taxi-cab as we crawled across London. It might have been an uneventful journey, but the driver was happy to let me know how he felt about all the major issues, puffing and blowing for the full five miles about this, that and the other.

"...terrible business, terrible... it's her mother I feel sorry for... I mean, I got nothing against them as such, but if they're unhappy here then why don't they go back to where they belong, that's what I'd like to know... And this ERM lark, well, that's come to nothing, ain't it? And they still haven't arrested the man what done it... I mean, it would never have

happened in the old days... But what really gets me, right, is why they took TV-am off when it was so popular... And another thing, who does that Lamont bloke think he is, buying champagne all day, and as for that Lynda La Plante... And so it went on.

I arrived home exhausted. "Who does that Lamont bloke think he is, buying champagne all day?" I said to my wife. She looked at me quizzically. "You've been passive opinionising all day, haven't you?" she said. We calculated that from newspaper columnists, radio phone-ins, taxi-drivers, fellow tube-travellers, MPs on the television and flower-sellers I was passively inhaling over 150 different opinions every single day. From now on, whenever I get into a taxi, I will be wearing a card around my neck saying "Thank You For Not Expressing An Opinion."

My doctor has every hope that, before long, my mind will slowly but surely show signs of improvement.

Government boosts job hopes with £2bn roads package

By Jonathan Pryn and Tim Jones

GOVERNMENT spending on main roads is to rise by 6 per cent to almost £2.1 billion in the next financial year, John MacGregor, the transport secretary announced in the Commons yesterday.

Mr MacGregor also signalled the publication, probably in April, of a discussion document on road tolls and private sector road building.

The programme for 1993-4 involves 41 new trunk road and motorway schemes, all due to be started by March next year. High-profile projects include the construction of four lanes to sections of the M25 in Surrey and the M62 in Greater Manchester, and a £113 million upgrading of motorway status of 13 miles of the A1 in North Yorkshire.

The announcement, which could create thousands of new jobs, was welcomed by the British Road Federation as good news for communities awaiting bypasses and for road users.

However, the Council for the Protection of Rural England claimed that the programme showed a "blatant

disregard for the environment". It alleged that the government's green credibility had been thrown out of the window. William Sheate, CPRE's assistant secretary, said: "The Department of Transport has paid no more than lip service to the environmental costs of this accelerated roads programme. How does the government square this with its commitment to environmentally sustainable development?"

He said the rift between the transport department and the environment department was growing wider by the day.

Mike Cottrell, president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, said the news was a welcome boost for the industry. He said the economic and social benefits of transport investment as a whole were substantial. "Public sector infrastructure investment has a direct and proven link with economic growth."

He added: "For every £1 invested by the government in roads, the average benefits to the community are more than doubled in terms of reductions

Cabinet delays decision on coal

By Jill Sherman
Political Correspondent

THE government's white paper on the coal industry is now expected to be delayed until the end of this month because of a cabinet split over funding a rescue package, legal problems and EC regulations.

Yesterday the full cabinet did not even discuss the draft proposals to bail out the coal industry, which had been drawn up by a committee chaired by Lord Wakeham.

Whitehall sources said that Lord Wakeham's committee would meet again after next week's cabinet meeting, so no cabinet decision would be taken until at least February 18. Officials said a white paper would then take about a week to prepare and print.

It is understood that while ministers are agreed in principle on a five-year tapering subsidy to relieve about half of the pits threatened with closure, they are divided on the extent of the subsidy and how it should be funded. Ministers are likely to back a similar package to the £500 million plan proposed by the Commons trade and industry select committee last week.

There is disagreement over whether the package should be funded by switching money from the nuclear subsidy or through a direct Treasury grant. Most ministers are opposed to an additional levy on electricity bills, although some of the cost could be passed on to consumers.

There have also been delays in reaching EC agreement on subsidies. Any subsidy for the energy sector has to be approved by EC officials, whether or not it means switching all or part of existing levies. Trade and industry officials said that negotiations were going well but had not been finalised. Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, is also waiting for a report from Ernst and Young, the accountants, on nuclear costs, which could sway the argument for switching some of the nuclear levy.

Officials made it clear that the government would not wait for the second Boyd report on the ten pits earmarked for closure, due on March 15.



Demolition expert: Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, who was addressing the Royal Society for Asian Affairs last night on how arms discussions should focus on the shifting alliances in central and far eastern former Soviet republics



Brown to answer critics

Government action is required to encourage investment in industry, training and infrastructure since the British economy does not have an inherent capacity to grow, Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, will argue later this month.

He will outline the party's approach to economic policy in a series of speeches starting next week. These are partly intended to answer internal critics who say that Labour has not been sufficiently clear in putting forward an alternative approach. Mr Brown's speeches will follow an address on Sunday from John Smith, the party leader, claiming that Labour is the party of change.

Price rise

House prices fell by 7 per cent last year, Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, said at question time yesterday. But recent activity was consistent with his view in the Autumn Statement that house prices could start to rise this year.

NUT attacked

The prime minister condemned the decision of the NUT to boycott the English examination for 14-year-olds. At question time John Major said it was a disgraceful decision that over time the union would regret. "I utterly deplore the politically motivated campaign being waged by some members of the NUT," he said.

Spring break

The Commons spring recess will be from May 28 to June 7.

In Parliament

Commons (9.30): Private members' bills: caravan sites (amendment) bill and pensions bill, second readings.

Maastricht respite

MPS ARE to get a break from the interminable scrutiny of the bill to implement the Maastricht treaty (Robert Morgan writes). When Tony Newton, Leader of the House, yesterday announced the Commons business for next week, there was no mention of the bill, which shortly afterwards started its eleventh day of detailed consideration.

The break from the bill may be extended to the week after next because government business managers are content with progress already made. Business managers are also anxious to make more headway with other bills and get them into the House of Lords before the upper House has to deal with the Maastricht bill.

Patten foresees end of the 'nanny' state

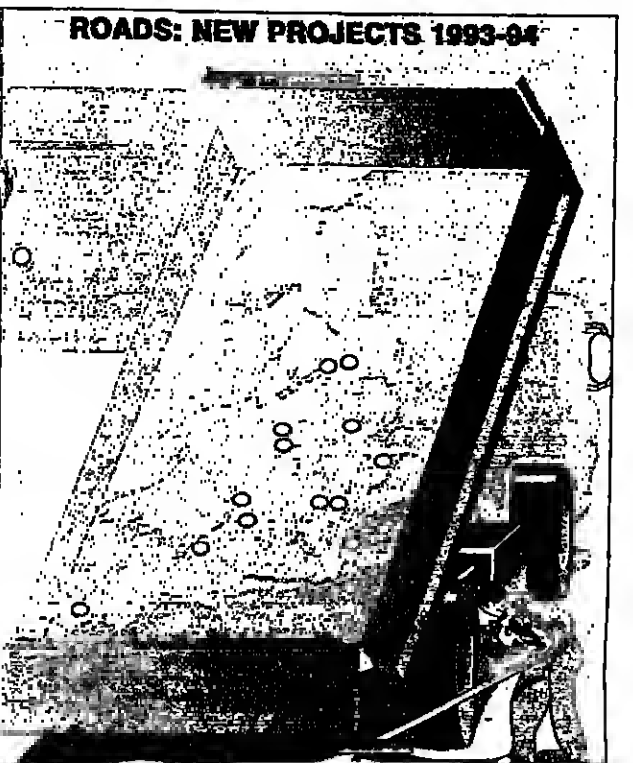
By Matthew D'Ancona

CONTROL of local services would be given to voluntary "care associations" and town halls phased out under a radical scheme unveiled last night by John Patten, the education secretary.


Mr Patten, who has become the government's unofficial spokesman on constitutional matters, said in a speech to the Conservative Political Centre that the drive to devolve power to citizens should continue and that the management of grant-maintained schools and hospital trusts could be a model for other services.

"The creation of what might be called care associations could act as a powerful magnet for local commitment and involvement... [and] could help identify local priorities and ensure that funds go where most needed," Mr Patten said. Care associations, which would resemble neighbourhood watch schemes and housing associations, should slowly take over allocation of local resources.

In a speech indicating the government's desire to continue restricting the role of local government, the education secretary said that the state should now act as "playground monitor" rather than nanny.



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Delors spars with Brittan as Hoover job dispute grows

Hoover's relocation of jobs is under fire. EC law is powerless to prevent the move

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

JACQUES Delors, president of the European Commission, used the dispute over "social dumping" and Hoover's relocation of jobs from France to Scotland to relaunch yesterday his vision of a social Europe.

After meeting Hoover union leaders, M Delors arrived at the European parliament in Brussels in fighting form. He said the European Community had to move away from the "two-thirds society" where the gap between rich and poor becomes so great that "proper sociological functioning breaks down". He spoke of the "crime, drugs and poverty of inner cities", and called for a "proper share-out so we can find the old social balance. Society must reinvent itself," he said. "This will bring us closer to traditional socialist values."

His outspoken remarks jarred with comments made earlier in the day by Sir Leon Brittan, the external economic affairs commissioner, who questioned whether the EC could really afford "the highest levels of social protection". The philosophical split that has so often divided Brussels policy in the past is alive and well.

M Delors bitterly criticised comments that used currency devaluation as a lever to win jobs, but avoided direct criticism of the prime minister or the government. "I would refer you to one member state

of the community without naming it," said M Delors. "Those who devalue in an extreme way will find health at the expense of the rest of the community. It's like three people shipwrecked — one person floats for the sake of the other two going under."

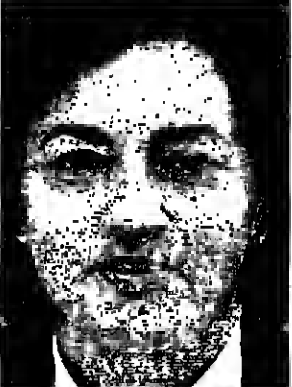
Nevertheless, he told the Hoover union leaders there was nothing in the short term the EC could do to prevent the relocation of jobs to lower cost economies. "He confirmed to us there have been no breaches of EC law in shipping jobs to Cambruslang from France," said the Scottish works' convenor, Eddie McAvo. "He said he could do nothing about it."

Instead M Delors said social dumping should become impossible in Europe by giving unions their rightful say in management decisions. He praised the "courageous" attitude of unions over the last decade. "Are they the only agents on the market to give without taking?" he said. "We must do more for workers."

Reopening an old wound with Britain, M Delors said it was time for Brussels to reintroduce the controversial EC directive giving workers in multinational companies the right to information and participation in management decisions. He said if the directive was now European Community law (it has always been blocked in the Council of Ministers by Britain) then "I am not saying definitely but we could have had a different outcome," on Hoover.

While welcoming the slight drop in German interest rates, he acknowledged the deep crisis now besetting the exchange rate mechanism of the EMS. "The speculators are practically running the economies,"

Vasso Papandreou, the Greek socialist and author of the *Social Charter* who has now left Brussels, warned that "nothing would change for a very long time" on social dumping. She backed M Delors' call for worker participation.



Ms Papandreou: "No change for long time"

SALARIES OU L'EURO E DES MARCHANDS ?

GRUNDIG



Caught in a vacuum: angry employees of Grundig and Hoover protesting in Brussels against the closure of plants and relocation of jobs from France to Scotland

Claims of 'sweatshop Britain' mask loss of jobs to Continent

France feels pain of the single market

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

THE European Community has regularly accused Britain of all manner of crimes but in the past few days a new charge has been added to the list: "social dumping".

French Socialist ministers, facing a heavy defeat at the polls next month, hurl the slogan at Britain almost hourly as *l'affaire Hoover* heats up the campaign. The bitter name-calling over the shift of 600 Hoover jobs from France to Britain reached Brussels yesterday as Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, talked darkly of "cynical bosses and self-centred governments".

The closure of a Hoover factory in Dijon might not have attracted more than local attention if the company's announcement had not been made in the midst of a French election campaign coloured by

economic decline. The allegation that Britain is becoming the EC's sweatshop state where ruthless multinationals can "dump" their plants ignores the scale of change sweeping European industry.

What the politicians are discovering is that the single market sometimes hurts. As one British official put it, with only a little exaggeration: "These things are happening every week."

There is little evidence that there is any net job flow from France to Britain or that jobs lost in France are flowing to Britain in larger numbers than to other states. A Johnson's Wax factory near Tours is to close with the loss of nearly 200 jobs. Most of the new jobs created by concentrating production will be created in The Netherlands.

The German television maker Grundig is threatening to move 900 jobs from Lorraine to Austria. A subsidiary of the American Rockwell corporation is moving a hundred jobs from Nantes to Preston.

But these moves are relatively small by comparison with the loss of British jobs to other EC countries. Britain may have lower wages but its continental counterparts can sometimes offer better-trained workforces, higher productivity or better access to the rich 'consumer markets' of the northern half of the EC.

Pilkingtons, the glass makers, headquartered in St Helens for 165 years, cut 750 Lancashire jobs when they moved their corporate headquarters to Brussels. Unilever moved its head office from London to The Netherlands. Thomson, the state-owned

French electronics group, shed 3,000 jobs when it closed a Ferguson television plant in Gosport in Hampshire. The computer firm, Unisys, cut 700 jobs in Livingston, Scotland, and redistributed them in plants elsewhere in the EC. Caterpillar, the American machinery multinational, moved 1,200 jobs from Britain to Grenoble in 1987.

The single market is supposed to boost the entire European economy by encouraging rationalisation and efficiency. Large firms now face a wide range of choice to achieve the mix of conditions which will best suit their plants.

"If cost were the only factor," said one analyst, "then Mercedes would have long ago shut up shop in Stuttgart and be making cars in the Peloponnese. But the decisions aren't as simple as that."

Danes fix May date for Maastricht vote

FROM CHRISTOPHER FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

DENMARK announced yesterday that its second referendum on the European Community Maastricht treaty would be held on May 18.

After protracted negotiations, the seven mainstream parties in the Danish parliament which support a "yes" in the new vote agreed on the date for the poll. Opinion surveys point towards a clear "yes" vote.

The referendum will be on a revised deal agreed with the EC at a summit in Edinburgh in December, allowing the Danes to opt out of the treaty's long-term plans for a common currency and joint defence.

The new Social Democratic centre-left coalition resisted pressure from the opposition parties to hold the vote earlier, on April 27. The April date had been originally mooted by the conservative-liberal government before it

resigned last month over a long-running political scandal.

"There was a clear majority among the seven parties to hold the referendum on the mid-May date. It gives us more time properly to inform the electorate about the content of Denmark's Maastricht deal," Ole Fich, the Social Democrat EC spokesman, said.

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the former Danish foreign minister, had urged the earlier vote so a swift clarification of Denmark's role within the EC would put a damper on the wave of speculation against the Danish krone within ERM.

"The quicker we can eradicate the uncertainty about Denmark's role in Europe, the better it will be for the krone and the Danish economy," Mr Ellemann-Jensen said.

Law Report February 5 1993 House of Lords

Withdrawal of medical treatment from hopeless case not unlawful

Airedale NHS Trust v Bland
Before Lord Keith of Kinkaid, Lord Goff of Chieveley, Lord Lowry, Lord Browne-Wilkinson and Lord Mustill
[Speeches February 4]

It was not unlawful for doctors to withdraw life supporting medical treatment, including artificial feeding through a nasogastric tube, from a patient in a permanent vegetative state who had no prospect of any recovery or improvement when it was known that the discontinuance of treatment would cause the patient's death within a matter of weeks.

However, medical practitioners should apply to the court for a declaration in each case as to the legality of any proposed discontinuance of life support where there was no valid consent on the part of the patient.

The House of Lords so held in dismissing an appeal by the Official Solicitor, acting on behalf of Mr Anthony Bland, from the dismissal by the Court of Appeal (*The Times* December 10, 1992) of his appeal from Sir Stephen Brown, President of the Family Division (*The Times* November 23, 1992) who had granted declarations on the application of the Airedale National Health Service Trust, in whose hospital Mr Bland was a patient.

That despite the inability of the defendant to consent thereto, the plaintiff and the responsible attending physicians:

"(a) may lawfully discontinue all life-sustaining treatment and medical supportive measures designed to keep the defendant alive in his persistent vegetative state including the termination of ventilation nutrition and hydration by artificial means; and (b) may lawfully discontinue and thereafter need not furnish medical treatment to the defendant except for the sole purpose of enabling him to end his life and die peacefully with the greatest dignity and the least of pain suffering and distress."

Mr James Munby, QC, for the appellant by his guardian *ad litem*: Mr Robert Francis, QC and Mr Michael R. Taylor for the respondents: Mr Anthony Lester, QC and Mr Pushpinder Sahni as amici curiae.

LORD GOFF said that there had been no disagreement between counsel that proceedings for declaratory relief of the kind considered by the House in *In re F (Mental Patient: Sterilisation)* [1990] 2 AC 1 provided the most appropriate means by which authoritative guidance could be provided for the respondents to the appeal whose wish it was, in agreement with Anthony Bland's parents, to discontinue his artificial feeding, with the inevitable result that within one or two weeks he would die.

Of course, strong warnings had been given against the civil courts usurping

the function of the criminal courts, and it had been authoritatively stated that a declaration as to the lawfulness or otherwise of future conduct was "no bar to a criminal prosecution, no matter the authority of the court which grants it" per Viscount Dilhorne in *Imperial Tobacco Ltd v Attorney General* [1981] AC 718, 741.

It would be a deplorable state of affairs if no authoritative guidance could be given to the medical profession in a case such as the present so that a doctor would be compelled either to act contrary to the principles of medical ethics established by his professional body or to risk a prosecution for murder.

To start with a simple fact, in law Anthony was still alive. It was true that his condition was such that he could be described as a living death, but he was nevertheless alive. That was because, as a result of developments in modern medical technology, it had come to be accepted that death occurred when the brain and in particular the brain stem had been destroyed. Anthony's brain stem was still alive and functioning.

The fundamental principle of law was the sanctity of human life, but that principle was not absolute. There was no absolute rule that a patient's life had to be prolonged by medical treatment regardless of the circumstances.

First, it was established that the principle of self-determination required that respect had to be given to the wishes of the patient, so that if an adult patient of sound mind refused, however unreasonably, to consent to treatment or care by which his life might be prolonged, the doctors responsible for his care had to give effect to his wishes, even though they did not consider it to be in his best interests to do so.

Moreover, the same principle applied where the patient's refusal to give his consent had been expressed at an earlier date before he became incapable of communicating.

In many cases not only might the patient be able to give his consent, say whether or not he consented to treatment but he might have given no prior indication of his wishes.

There was no absolute obligation upon the doctor to prolong his life regardless of circumstances. Indeed it would be most startling and could lead to the most adverse and cruel effects upon the patient if any such absolute rule were held to exist.

The former might be lawful either because the doctor was giving effect to his patient's wishes or even in certain circumstances in which the patient was incapacitated from stating whether or not he gave his consent.

But it was not lawful for a doctor to administer a drug to his patient to bring about his death, even though that course was prompted by a humanitarian desire to end his suffering.

So to act was to cross the Rubicon which ran between, on the one hand, the care of the living patient and, on the other hand, euthanasia, actively causing his death to avoid or end suffering.

At the heart of the distinction lay a theoretical question. Why was it that the doctor who gave his patient a lethal injection which killed him committed an unlawful act and was guilty of murder, whereas a doctor who, by discontinuing life support, allowed his patient to die might not act unlawfully and would not do so if he committed no breach of duty to his patient?

The doctor's conduct in discontinuing life support could properly be categorised as an omission. It was true that it might be difficult to describe what the doctor actually did as an omission, system, he would not continue to live, the decision had to be made whether or not to give him that benefit if available. That decision could only be made in the best interests of the patient.

In each case the doctor was simply allowing the patient to die in the sense that he was desisting from taking a step which might prevent his patient from dying as a result of his pre-existing condition: and as a matter of general principle an omission such as that would not be unlawful unless it constituted a breach of duty to the patient.

It was, of course, the development of modern medical technology, and in particular the development of life support systems, which had rendered cases such as the present so much more relevant than in the past.

Even so, where a patient was brought into hospital in such a condition that, without the benefit of a life support system, he would not continue to live, the decision had to be made whether or not to give him that benefit if available. That decision could only be made in the best interests of the patient.

But if he neither recovered sufficiently to be taken off it nor died the question would ultimately arise whether he should be kept on it indefinitely. That question could only be answered by reference to the best interests of the patient himself, having regard to established medical practice.

Indeed if the justification for treating a patient who lacked the mental capacity to consent lay in the fact that treatment was provided in his best interests, it had to follow that the treatment might and ultimately should be discontinued where it was no longer in his best interests to

provide it. The question which lay at the heart of the present case was whether or not that principle applied to the treatment and care of Anthony Bland could justifiably discontinue the process of artificial feeding upon which the prolongation of life depended.

It was crucial for the understanding of the question that the question itself should be correctly formulated. The question was not whether the doctor should take a course which would kill his patient, or even take a course which had the effect of accelerating his death.

The question was whether the doctor should or should not continue to provide his patient with medical treatment which, if continued, would prolong his patient's life.

The correct formulation of the question was of particular importance in a case such as the present where the patient was totally unconscious and where there was no hope whatsoever of any amelioration of his condition.

In such circumstances it was not difficult to say that it was in his best interests that treatment should be ended. But if the question was asked whether it was in his best interests that treatment which had the effect of prolonging his life should be continued, that question could sensibly be answered to the effect that his best interests no longer required that it should be.

For his Lordship's part, he could not see that medical treatment was appropriate to initiate or to continue life-prolonging treatment or care in the best interests of his patient. It followed that no such duty rested upon the respondents in the case of Anthony Bland whose condition was in reality no more than a living death and for whom such treatment or care would in medical terms be futile. In the present case, it was proposed that the doctors should be entitled to discontinue both the artificial feeding of Anthony and the use of antibiotics.

It was plain from the evidence that Anthony in his present condition was

very prone to infection and that over some necessary uncertainty but not very long period of time he would succumb to infection which, if unchecked, would spread and cause his death. But the effect of discontinuing the artificial feeding would be that he would inevitably die within one or two weeks.

Objection could be made to the latter course of action on the ground that he would thereby be starved to death and that that would constitute a breach of the duty to feed him which must form an essential part of the duty which every person owed to another in his care. But here again it was necessary to analyse precisely what that meant in the case of Anthony.

Anthony was not merely incapable of feeding himself. He was incapable of swallowing and therefore of eating and drinking in the normal sense of those words. There was overwhelming evidence that, in the medical profession, artificial feeding was regarded as a form of life support analogous to that provided by a ventilator. The same principles had to apply in either case: and if in either case the treatment was futile it could properly be concluded that it was no longer in the best interests of the patient to continue it.

It was true that in the case of discontinuance of artificial feeding it could be said that the patient would as a result starve to death, but it was clear from the evidence that no pain or suffering would be caused to Anthony who could feel nothing at all.

Furthermore, the outward symptoms of dying in such a way, which might otherwise cause distress to those caring for him could be suppressed by means of sedatives. In those circumstances there was no ground for refusing the declarations applied for simply because the discontinuance of artificial feeding would result in the patient's death.

In *In re F* it was stated that where a doctor provided treatment for a person who was incapacitated from saying whether or not he consented to it, doctors, when deciding on the form of treatment, had to act in accordance with a responsible and competent body of relevant professional opinion, on the principles set down in *Bolton v Friern Hospital Management Committee* (1957) 1 WLR 582. That principle must equally be applicable to decisions to initiate or discontinue life support as it was to other forms of treatment.

However, in a matter of such importance and sensitivity it was to be expected that guidance would be provided for the profession; and on the evidence such guidance was to be found

in a "Discussion Paper on Treatment of Patients in Persistent Vegetative State" issued in September 1992 by the medical ethics committee of the British Medical Association. Anybody reading that paper would discover for himself the great care with which the topic was being considered by the profession.

Attention had been drawn to four safeguards in particular which should be observed before discontinuing life support for such patients:

- 1 Every effort should be made at rehabilitation for at least six months after injury.
- 2 The diagnosis of irreversible PVS should not be considered confirmed until at least 12 months after the injury.
- 3 The diagnosis should be agreed by at least two other independent doctors.
- 4 Generally, the wishes of the patient's immediate family would be given great weight.

Study of that document left his Lordship in no doubt that if a doctor treating a PVS patient acted in accordance with the medical practice now being evolved by the medical ethics committee, he would be acting with the benefit of guidance from a responsible and competent body of relevant professional opinion.

American courts adopted the approach under which the court sought in a case in which the patient was incapacitated from expressing any view on the question whether life-prolonging treatment should be withheld in the relevant circumstances, to determine what decision the patient himself would have made had he been able to do so. That was called the substituted judgment test and generally involved a detailed enquiry into the patient's views and preferences.

However, such a test did not form a part of English law in relation to incompetent adults on whose behalf nobody had power to give consent to medical treatment. Certainly in *In re F* the House adopted a straightforward test based on the best interests of the patient; and his Lordship could not see why the same test should not be applied in the case of PVS patients where the question was whether life-prolonging treatment should be withheld.

His Lordship turned finally to the extent to which doctors should, as a matter of practice, seek the guidance of the court by way of an application for declaratory relief before withholding life-prolonging treatment from a PVS patient.

The President had considered that the opinion of the court should be sought in all cases similar to the present and the Master of the Rolls had expressed his agreement.

There was much to be said for the view that an application to the court would not be needed in every case but only in particular circumstances where, for example, there was disagreement. How-

ever, that was a matter which would be better kept under review by the President of the Family Division than resolved in the instant case.

His Lordship would therefore leave the matter as proposed by the Master of the Rolls but expressed the hope that the President, who would no doubt be kept informed of developments in the field, would soon feel able to relax the present requirement so as to limit applications for declarations to those cases in which there was a special need for the procedure to be invoked.

Lord Keith and Lord Lowry delivered concurring judgments.

LORD BROWNE-WILKINSON, concurring, said that he was conscious that he had reached his conclusions on narrow, legalistic grounds which provided no satisfactory basis for the decision of cases which would arise in the future where the facts were not identical.

He emphasised that this was an extreme case where it could be overwhelmingly proved that the patient was and would remain insensate; he neither felt pain from treatment nor would feel pain in dying and had no awareness of any medical care improving his condition.

Unless, as his Lordship very much hoped, Parliament reviewed the law, the courts would be faced with cases where the chances of improvement were slight, or the patient had very slight sensory awareness. His Lordship expressed no view on what would be the answer in such circumstances.

Therefore, for the foreseeable future, doctors would be well advised in each case to apply to the court for a declaration as to the legality of the proposed discontinuance of life support where there had been no valid consent by or on behalf of the patient to such discontinuance.

LORD MUSTILL, concurring, said that while the reasoning he proposed was broadly in line with that of their Lordships, he ventured some reservations about the application of the principle of civil liability in negligence laid down in *Bolton* to decisions on "best interests" in a field dominated by the criminal law.

His Lordship accepted without difficulty that that principle applied to the ascertainment of the medical raw material such as diagnosis, prognosis and appraisal of the patient's cognitive functions.

Beyond that point however, it might be said that the decision was ethical not medical and that there was no reason in logic why on such a decision the opinions of doctors should be decisive. However, his Lordship expressed no opinion on that question.

Solicitors: Official Solicitor, Mr W. J. M. Lovel, Harrogate; Treasury Solicitor

Dictator treads the corrupt and brutal path of Leopold



Leopold II: amassed fortune from rubber

By SAM KILEY
AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

THE AIR in Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, is heavy. Dense humidity produces fungi that spread a green patina over cement and rot it. The air also carries the unmistakable scent of corruption which first emanated not from President Mobutu but from the Belgian royal family.

Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa za Banga, reputed to be the fifth richest man in the world, having amassed a fortune of at least \$9 billion (£6.3 billion) after reducing his country to destitution, is the heir to the nation's "founding father" — Leopold II, King of the Belgians.

estimated and conniving backroom politician, ran the Congo Free State south of the Congo River as a personal fiefdom after persuading the journalist-explorer, Henry Stanley, to set up trading stations along the river's course in the name of Christianity, civilisation, and commerce. Only one of David Livingstone's "three Cs" survived Leopold's reign between 1878 and 1907 over the tropical treasure store he never saw: commerce.

Zaire is abundant in copper, diamonds, cobalt, zinc, gold, cassiterite, manganese, cadmium, silver, wolframite, and colombo-tantalite. It has oil and a million square miles of unexploited hardwood forest, plus an equatorial climate to supplement its fertile soils.

In the guise of philanthropy, Leopold's agents persuaded the great powers to recognise the Congo Free State as a sovereign entity controlled by him through adventurers such as Stanley, who subdued the locals with the breech-loading rifle and armies of cannibals. One of Leopold's lieutenants remarked in a letter home after a particularly bloody massacre of rival Arab slave traders that cannibalism in battle was "horrible but exceedingly useful and hygienic".

It was such considerations that allowed Leopold to regain the fortune that his family sank into enterprises in the Congo through the production of wild rubber. Publicly a crusader against slavery, Leo-

pold amassed a fortune from the boom in rubber after the invention of the pneumatic tyre by forcing local people to harvest rubber gum at gun point. Those who failed to meet quotas were killed or had their hands chopped off.

Mr Mobutu is believed to have hidden his fortune in Swiss bank accounts. Leopold, who kept his real earnings from the Congo Free State off the books, secreted his in a German-based trust.



Thousands of villages were depopulated under Leopold. Then, in 1907, as now, the great powers ganged up on the Congolese "head of state" and demanded that he step aside. Horrified by the reports of brutality under the Free State, the French and Ameri-

But when Leopold handed over the running of the Free State to the Belgian administration, he kept most of the lucrative rubber areas. After his death, the exploitation of the richly endowed virgin lands populated by "backward" people easily trapped into peonage continued.

The Belgians left only a handful of indigenous graduates and no black above the rank of sergeant major in the armed forces when they granted Zaire independence in 1960 and fled.

The return of Zaire to a pre-industrial age after the exodus of 100,000 foreigners left a vacuum which Mr Mobutu filled in 1965. He is accused of feathering his own nest and corrupting those opponents he

has been unable to kill or exile. Now he seldom enters Kinshasa (formerly Leopoldville) and spends most of his time on a luxury boat moored outside the capital or at his home village, Ngabolite — the only hamlet in the world with an international airport.

The "immortal red hot chili pepper" or "the cock to jump all the chicks in the farmyard", as Mr Mobutu's full name is variously translated, may take the advice of the Western powers and flee Zaire before he is toppled and retire like Leopold to one of his châteaux in the south of France. But he will leave an anarchic Zaire ruled only by mammon. The question now is whether Mr Tshisekedi can lay the Belgian king's ghost to rest.

Western governments struggle to find way of curbing Mobutu

FROM CHARLES BREMNER
IN PARIS

WHILE President Mitterrand presided over the funeral of France's ambassador to Zaire in Paris yesterday, French, Belgian, American and European Community envoys struggled in Brussels to find a way to put muscle behind their demand for the departure of President Mobutu. Their options are limited.

In France, the only colonial power to have maintained a powerful presence in Africa, the failure to curb the despotic behaviour of former clients in Zaire, Togo and other states is embarrassing the Mitterrand administration. Short of military intervention, which has been ruled out by Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, President Mobutu's main Western patrons have few remedies at their disposal for oppressing the dictator from office. At their Brussels meeting, Herman Cohen, the American assistant Secretary of State for Africa, and his counterparts Jean de la Sablière of France and Wilfried Jaenen of Belgium, were said to be reviewing options. Those run from economic and diplomatic sanctions to aid for an interim government and the seizure of President Mobutu's holdings abroad which are said to exceed Zaire's foreign debt.

The three countries cut all

French paternalism in Africa has helped to spawn dictatorships. Now demands by Paris for greater freedom are being ignored

but humanitarian aid to Zaire in 1991 after the bloody suppression of an earlier round of riots. President Mobutu reacted with scorn yesterday to the three countries' demand that he hand over power to the interim government. "They want to condemn the fireman on behalf of the arsonist," he said.

The three blamed Zaire's self-styled "Supreme Guide" squarely for the latest crisis, which has resulted in the deaths of more than 300 people since the army mutiny last Thursday, including Philippe Bernard, the French ambassador.

Mr Tshisekedi called on Monday for foreign troops to restore order in his country, but France, which sent troops to help in evacuating foreign citizens, said it was no longer ready to play the gendarme in Africa as it had done during the Cold War. "There is no question of standing in for governments or peoples there in their choice of one leader or another," M. Dumas said.

France withdrew its troops yesterday. M. Dumas' remarks also applied to Togo, another client state, whose leader for the past 26 years, General Gnassingbe Eyadema, ordered troops to fire on crowds during a joint visit late last month by Marcel Debarge and Helmut Schaefer, the French and German ministers responsible for African co-operation. At least 20 were killed, including a French child. Yesterday, France and Germany called the two Togo-

lese factions to a negotiating session in the French city of Colmar on Sunday.

The tyrannical behaviour of leaders long backed by France has highlighted the failure of a campaign launched by M. Mitterrand to encourage democracy in the French-speaking states. For his first nine years in office, M. Mitterrand had maintained the paternalistic relations with African leaders that had been pursued by his right-wing predecessors. His main instrument was his son, Jean-Christophe, a former journalist, whom he appointed as his personal go-between. The job led the younger Mitterrand to be satirically dubbed "Papa-madri" (Daddy-told-me).

In 1990, M. Mitterrand used his annual "francophone summit" to read the riot act, telling President Mobutu and other leaders that economic aid, which still totals nearly £100 a year for every French citizen, would henceforward depend on steps to democracy. There have been few results.

President Mobutu and other unpopular leaders are now banking on a much more sympathetic approach from the conservative government that is expected to replace the Socialists after elections late next month. Charles Pasqua, the Gaullist heavyweight and likely minister in the next government, has been touring Africa reassuring leaders there that they can expect less interference under conservatives. The French press have dubbed him "Africa Charlie".



Riding shotgun: a Russian militiaman travelling on a special platform on the Russian-Caucasian train as it passes through Cherkessk station in Chechnya. Security was tightened and all trains are now protected after passengers had been robbed by armed gangs on the route

Old despot steers Rangoon repression

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN RANGOON

GENERAL Ne Win, at 82 Burma's aging but virtuous despot, is a man of sudden whims and huge rages who has also a healthy respect for the occult. Superstitious, megalomaniac, xenophobic and idiosyncratic — these are some of the descriptions of him in Rangoon's diplomatic community.

On the human side, he likes to spend time with his grandchildren; at the same time he has an eye for the women, having had five wives. Street mirror, a dangerous pastime here, says he now has a liaison with a 30-year-old woman from Arakan province.

It is the general, a former associate of the assassinated Aung San, hero of Burma's independence struggle with Britain, who has brought Burma, once one of South-east Asia's richest countries, close to economic ruin, its health and education system impoverished, its citizens afraid of contact with foreigners and harassed by an omnipresent

secret police. It is he who has held the daughter of Aung San, the pro-democracy campaigner, Aung San Suu Kyi, under house arrest for three and a half years, and he has presided over the massive human rights abuses of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, a military junta that took over in 1988 after the bloody suppression of pro-democracy protests.

"Ne Win still pulls the strings," a foreign diplomat said. "The military chiefs run things day by day but go to him before making any important decisions. He appointed them all and they owe their loyalty to him. He is the ultimate arbiter of power."

Foreign envoys say that as long as the general is alive — and, despite being a chronic worrier about his health, he is said to be fighting fit — Daw Suu Kyi, awarded the Nobel peace prize in 1991, will not be freed to participate in political life here, such as it is.

He is unforgiving because he perceives that Daw Suu Kyi did the unpardonable: criticised him in public.

General Ne Win, who started his career as a postal clerk and, according to some, climbed on Aung San's bandwagon during the independence struggle, has held the line against various ethnic insurgents such as the Karen, Shan and Mon. But the government he overthrew had been discussing a settlement with these ethnic groups, who have no trust in the general.

The elderly dictator is presumed behind moves now towards limited relaxation here, as the regime attempts to ease an international aid embargo by lifting curfew and some martial law decrees, and freeing some political prisoners. But it has been under General Ne Win's stewardship since he seized power in 1962 that Burma declined, under his so-called Burmese way to socialism, to near the

bottom of the UN list of the world's poorest states.

He ordered the end of the Burmese way and the introduction of a market economy after the restoration council took power. Cloves looked more prosperous, with goods stacked on market shelves, and some entrepreneurs are getting rich, but the market has fuelled corruption among military leaders.

General Ne Win nowadays lives as a virtual recluse in a heavily guarded residence on Inya Lake in Rangoon, on the other side from where Daw Suu Kyi is held under armed guard.

As Orwell portrayed an unscrupulous old man in his 1930s novel, *Burmese Days*: "It was time now to be making ready for the next world — in short, to begin building pagodas." General Ne Win, who perhaps feels his mortality, has now done just that, erecting a temple next to golden-domed Shwedagon pagoda.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Belorussia ratifies Start pact

Minsk: Parliament in the former Soviet republic of Belorussia ratified the Start I nuclear disarmament treaty at a closed session yesterday.

Deputies leaving the chamber said the pact, signed between the United States and Soviet Union in 1991, had been approved after a heated debate. No details were available on the vote. (Reuters)

Haiti failure

Miami: A United Nations special envoy left Haiti after failing to reach agreement with the military-backed government over plans to restore to power the democratically elected president, Jean Bertrand Aristide.

Toll rises

Manila: The estimated death toll from the eruption of Mount Mayon rose to 67. The authorities were preparing for the possible evacuation of thousands still living in the volcano's shadow as fears of a further eruption grew. (AFP)

Heat kills 12

Sydney: At least 12 people have died from exhaustion and dehydration in a heat-wave in southern and eastern Australia, with temperatures reaching 113°F in places.

Second chance

Boston: Swiss doctors have used the same human heart in two successive transplant operations. With the second recipient, who had previously had four heart attacks, remaining healthy for a year. (Reuters)

Death charges

Ankara: Turkey has accused an Islamic fundamentalist murder ring with Iranian links of carrying out three political killings. But it stopped short of directly accusing Tehran of responsibility. (Reuters)

So sorry

Tokyo: Japan's public television network aired an unusual two-minute apology after admitting it faked much of a documentary on the remote Nepalese region of Mustang. (AFP)

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UN office in Kabul wrecked

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
IN ISLAMABAD

KABUL came under rocket and artillery attack for the fifteenth consecutive day yesterday as the power struggle between government and rebel forces intensified.

Most of Afghanistan enjoys peace of sorts but the capital is being pulverised in a many-sided contest for supremacy. There is no effective government, no electricity, no running water, no police force and no telephone service.

All or most aid organisations are expected to pull out of the city. The building that houses the UN High Commissioner for Refugees was severely damaged last night in a direct hit. Nobody was injured.

The government is attempting to drive out Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-i-Islami rebel faction. Pakistan is alarmed that the worsening chaos could spill across the border into the North West Frontier Province, which is predominantly Pathan. Mr Hekmatyar is the most prominent Pathan leader and Islamabad fears that he may try to revive the idea of a separate homeland called Pashunistan, straddling the Afghan-Pakistan border. Authorities in eastern Afghanistan have arrested more than a dozen Arabs on suspicion of their involvement in the assassination of three UN workers and an engineer early this week. The gunmen fired indiscriminately, killing the Afghan drivers of two vehicles, Tony Bullard, a Briton, and J. A. van Hoelaken, a Dutch water engineer. (AFP)

Space mirror sheds new light on Earth

BY NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE possibilities of lighting darker parts of the globe from space, and flying across the solar system on sunbeams, have moved an important step closer.

Russia yesterday that it had deployed a 33-ft-wide space mirror which, just before dawn, lit parts of Europe in a thin, weak shaft of sunlight travelling from France across to Gornal in Belorussia. The 10lb fan-like structure, made of plastic coated in aluminium, was unfurled at 5.22 GMT from the back of a Progress supply rocket as it left the Mir space station.

Apart from focusing light, such a structure could be used as a sail to propel a spacecraft at about 242,000mph. Initial reports said that cloud cover had ruined the seven-minute light show. But later observers in several areas reported seeing the reflected sunlight, estimated to be the equivalent power of up to five moons, as it sped over Europe in a band 2.4 miles wide.

Meteorologists on the Zugspitze, Germany's highest mountain, said: "It was very bright and passed very quickly."

Witnesses in Toulouse described the effect as resembling "two luminous diamonds... passing through the sky."

Viktor Blagov, deputy flight director at ground control in Moscow, said Gennadiy Mamonov and Aleksandr Poleshechuk, cosmonauts on the Mir space station, had filmed the light and transmitted pictures to Earth.

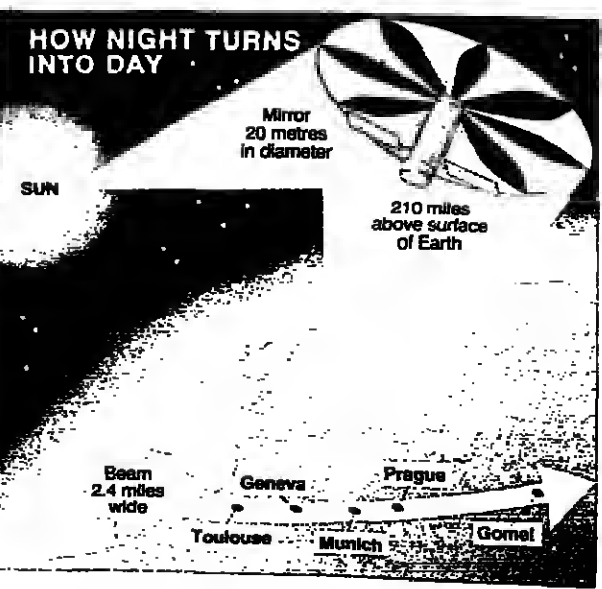
Western backers had been sought but doubted that the project was technically feasible. In the end, the Russian mission, orchestrated by the space agency NPO Energia, was funded by Russian companies, including a car and natural gas firm whose names have been written on the sail.

Phil Clark, editor of *World Wide Satellite Launches*, said yesterday: "They have been talking about this mission for donkeys' years but they have not had the money. They are digging out all their ideas to see if the West bites."

The mission follows an idea first proposed in the 1920s by Herman Oberth, a German scientist. By proving that a wafer-thin space mirror can

be unfurled, kept open and used to focus sunlight on to Earth, engineers believe that one day several larger mirrors could be placed permanently in orbit to light regions such as Siberia and Canada which, during the winter months, are almost permanently in darkness. It has also been suggested that sunlight could be focused at night on remote disaster areas to help relief and rescue workers after, say, an earthquake or an airline accident.

Leading article, page 15



Cancellation of talks raises doubts over Middle East process

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

THE future of the 15-month-old Middle East peace process was cast into doubt yesterday after several sets of multilateral negotiations due to resume next week were postponed indefinitely.

Israeli and Palestinian officials confirmed that American, co-sponsor of the talks, would not be issuing invitations for at least three of the five multilateral rounds, due to resume this month, because of doubts over Arab participation after the deportation of Palestinians.

The news was greeted as a victory by the 396 Palestinian exiles stranded in no man's land, who claimed the Arab participants in the negotiations would continue to boycott the process until Israel allowed them to return home.

The postponement is a victory for the Arab stand and a victory for the deportees, said Abdul Aziz al-Rantisi, head of the makeshift camp at Marj az-Zuhur. "Our spirits are very, very high. The men are not looking at when they will go back as much as they are looking at how they will defeat Yitzhak Rabin [the Israeli prime minister] and close the door on further deportations."

Evi Manor, Israel's foreign ministry spokesman, said:

■ Palestinians hailed the postponement of peace negotiations as a victory. It poses a challenge for the new US Secretary of State

"We are very sorry about the delays because a very important element in negotiations is sticking to the schedule." Palestinians and Israelis were told by the State Department that the next rounds of talks on economics, due to resume in Rome on Tuesday, and on arms control, scheduled for Washington on Wednesday, were cancelled.

A third round of negotiations on refugees, which had been scheduled for February 17, was also postponed, while the fate of two other sessions, on water resources in Geneva on February 15 and the environment in Tokyo on February 22, remained in doubt.

Although the cancellation of the multilateral talks is certainly a blow to the prospects of the peace process, the status of the main bilateral negotiations, due to resume between Israel and Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the Palestinians this month was unclear. Hanan Ashrawi, spokesman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, insisted that a suspension of the talks would depend on Israel's full compliance with UN Security Council resolution 799, which demands the immediate repatriation of all the Palestinian deportees.

The Arab stand has landed Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, with his first big challenge: how to keep the peace process going more than a year after it was launched by James Baker, his predecessor.

Mrs Ashrawi is expected to travel to Washington in the coming days for talks at the State Department. She will be followed next week by Shimon Peres, the Israeli foreign minister. If those contacts fail to break the impasse, it is possible that Mr Christopher will come out to the region in an attempt to resolve the parties' differences.

Quite aside from the political hurdles facing the peace process, diplomats gave warning that there were also some religious impediments to an early resumption of dialogue. The Muslim holy month of Ramadan begins on February 24. That will be followed soon afterwards by the Jewish holiday of Passover, which starts early in April.



Expelled from Israel: Rickie Kendall and her daughter Hope, from Hope, Idaho, at a press conference in Jerusalem after being denied immigration visas into Israel. The Kendalls, with Gary and Shirley Beresford, who hold British passports but came from South Africa, were given until February 20 to leave Israel because they belong to the Messianic Jews sect (Richard

Beeston writes). Richard Kendall claimed that the families were being victimised by the authorities because of their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. The Beresfords said that they have spent the past six years in Israel trying to become citizens. "We both identify with our Jewish people and the state of Israel," said Mr Beresford, whose two sons served in the Israeli army's

elite paratroop unit. "We have no desire to remove ourselves from the House of Israel nor from our Judaism, but we have the right to hold personal beliefs and ideas... We appeal to the people of Israel not to deport us and not to allow this injustice to take place." Although Israel's law of return grants automatic citizenship to anybody who can prove he is at least a quarter

Jewish by birth — and the two families qualify for citizenship by the birth criterion — recent legal rulings and the increasing power of ultra-orthodox parties in government have made it difficult for some Jews to continue to live in Israel, particularly members of the Messianic Jews. Two high court decisions have ruled that the families are no longer regarded as Jews by the state.

President returns to campaign trail

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Clinton had a win some, lose some yesterday as he pressed ahead with an ambitious agenda of social and political reforms.

On the down side, he was being forced into a drastic scaling back of his much-touted scheme of national service for Americans students to pay back college loans as teachers, police officers or other community work. He was also rebuffed by fellow Democrats in Congress on his ideas for revising campaign financing to reduce the cost of elections.

On the bright side, a bill that will enable American workers to take up to 12 weeks off without pay for the birth of a child or a serious illness in the family was proceeding rapidly through Congress.

Although the road was far from smooth, the Clinton administration seemed to have a firmer grip on where it was going than during its first days in office when its course was strewn with the Zoe Baird and homosexuals-in-uniform debates.

Mr Clinton has also decided to make his first presidential foray beyond Washington. Next Wednesday, he will go to Detroit for a campaign-style town meeting, a format in which he excels. The president will answer questions from Americans in a studio and others linked by satellite. He may well try to prepare them for the expected tax increases he will announce one week later, on February 17, in a joint session of Congress.

There could be anger that his promise of national service in exchange for college tuition has fallen on the ground of cost. It will still happen, White House officials said yesterday, but will start slowly and may not be fully operational for five to ten years — a timetable not mentioned by Mr Clinton during the campaign.

Senate Republicans were trying, without much hope of success, to delay the family-leave bill by attaching an amendment that would enforce the ban on homosexuals in the military which Mr Clinton wants to lift. The bill had been twice vetoed by President Bush.

Mr Clinton has eased up on two trade union restrictions imposed by Mr Bush before he left office, the first friendly gesture towards organised labour since Ronald Reagan entered the White House 12 years ago. One measure had forced government contractors to post notices telling non-union workers they were not required to join a union and could not be forced to pay dues for political activities they opposed. The other barred union-only labour agreements on government contracts.

Clinton plans to halve troop levels in Europe by 1996

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

TWO weeks into his administration, President Clinton has launched his second assault on the American military with a plan to cut defence spending by about \$8.3 billion (£6 billion) in the next fiscal year, on top of the savings envisaged by the Bush presidency.

Mr Clinton's cuts package includes halving the number of American troops, currently about 200,000, stationed in Europe by 1996. Overall, the number of troops on active duty is expected to be cut from 1.8 million to 1.4 million during the president's four-year term of office. President Bush had set 1.6 million as the minimum consistent with defence requirements.

The cuts form part of Mr Clinton's general economic strategy of switching funds from the military to the civilian sectors and to finance an ambitious programme for recovery. Mr Clinton will announce the details of his economic package during his first State of the Union address on February 17.

The military spending cuts, which will lead to a substantial reduction in American troops by the end of the year, have provoked a subdued reaction from the military after last week's outrage over the president's plan to scrap a ban on homosexuals serving in the armed forces. The forces carry less influence over the question of defence spending than that of homosexual servicemen. Expenditure cuts have broad public appeal.

The new administration also envisages shifting the balance of defence spending in favour of hi-tech projects, which may attract more funds. These programmes include converting military industries into civilian industries, and a few military ventures, such as the Seawolf submarine. The

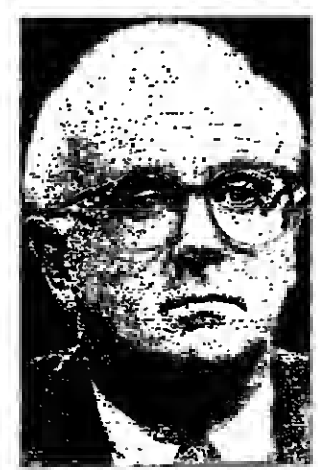
shift in emphasis was underlined by the appointment of William Perry, co-director of the Centre for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University, and a defence technology expert, as deputy defence secretary.

The defence budget is expected to be reduced in real terms from a present \$267.8 billion to \$259.3 billion in the next fiscal year, which starts on October 1.

Les Aspin, the defence secretary, has asked the army to cut \$2.5 billion from its budget, the navy \$3 billion and the air force \$2.8 billion. In addition, spending on the Strategic Defence Initiative, known as the "Star Wars" programme, which includes the Patriot missile system, would be cut by \$2.5 billion.

However, the total figure represented by these cuts, at \$10.8 billion, is thought to be unrealistic as it includes \$2.5 billion in scheduled "administrative savings", which the Bush presidency had falsely hoped to achieve, leaving a net saving of \$8.3 billion.

In addition, the spending



Aspin: has told forces of spending cuts needed

reductions are likely to be smaller because of the Democrat administration's proposals to commit extra funds to various high-technology and "tanks-into-ploughshares" conversion programmes.

The package amounts to a first step to fulfilling Mr Clinton's election pledge of cutting military spending by a total of \$60 billion during his term of office.

Leon Panetta, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, has been involved in discussions with colleagues on how to achieve the proposed cuts. The \$8.3 billion savings plan is the first step in what is likely to be an annual round of defence cuts, aimed at fulfilling President Clinton's campaign goal.

In a terse letter, Mr Aspin has asked defence chiefs to come up with proposals for the prescribed cuts by Monday. The defence secretary has only a few weeks until he submits the final proposal to Mr Panetta, who will incorporate the savings in the budget, which President Clinton will be presenting to Congress on March 23.

In practice, defence spending cuts rarely turn out as first envisaged. Defence officials have confirmed that substantial cuts are on the way, but caution against placing too great an emphasis on precise figures. Instead, they prefer to speak in terms of a range from \$6 billion to \$11 billion.

Cl Moscow, Russia has dismantled all tactical nuclear missiles on its ships, submarines and navy aircraft, in accordance with a decision which was taken in 1991 by Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet president, the defence ministry said yesterday. The Pentagon has estimated that Moscow had 17,000 such weapons. (Reuters)

It's not a real zoo in there

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

THE New York Zoological Society has decided to drop the word zoo from its vocabulary in favour of "wildlife conservation park" in deference to the sensibilities of the 10,000 animals contained in such places throughout New York.

Zoo, short for "zoological garden", is now considered too insulting a word for official use, since its secondary definition in *The American Heritage Dictionary* is "a place marked by rampant confusion and disorder", as in "this place is a complete zoo". Zoos, the society claims, are not at all zoo-like.

"We are not confused or disordered," said William Conway, president of the Zoological Society, adding that the word zoo would be replaced with "terminology that reflects preserving life". He also pointed out that zoos (the name may still be used until Monday) are only

one part of the work of the society, which funds 158 research and conservation projects around the world. For the sake of consistency, the 98-year-old society is changing its own name to NYZS/The Wildlife Conservation Society.

The decision to drop the word comes after two years of bitter debate in wildlife circles over whether zoo is really a pejorative term, and whether it matters if it is. Jungle, for example, can be an equally negative term as in "it's a jungle out there", but nobody is suggesting renaming the Amazon jungle "heavily forested tropical area with important ozone implications in South America, to be enjoyed equally by Homo sapiens and other species". Well, not yet.

Others argue that a wildlife park suggests a place where animals roam free, or even in some parts of the

world a game park where animals may be hunted for food. Wildlife translates as meat in some languages. That is not the impression the zoological society wishes to convey. Mr Conway defends the change of name as a sign of our altered perceptions about protecting endangered animals. "They are high-falutin' words for a high-falutin' objective."

So, from next week, New York's zoos will all become wildlife conservation parks and the largest of all, the Bronx Zoo, will be known as the International Wildlife Conservation Park. Note that the word Bronx has been dropped, presumably since the most dangerous and drug-infested neighbourhood in New York is a bit of a zoo.

So next time you feel your office or home is a zoo, take heart: it is just a wildlife conservation centre.

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What makes the young conservative?

Alice Thomson
asks what
manner of
person will be
partying in
Southend this
weekend

They run advertising campaigns in *Viz* magazine, they sell T-shirts emblazoned with a food-stained "I had lunch with Roy Hattersley", and their free magazine, *Campaigner*, has interviews with Lindi St Clair of the Conservative party, and a quiz, "Are you Trendy?"

This weekend, Young Conservatives from across the country will descend on Southend-on-Sea for their annual conference. If the organisers are to be believed, it will be one of the most exciting social raves of the year, with politics by day and parties by night. "It's damn good fun," Adrian McLellan, the chairman of the YCs, says. "You get there on Friday and don't go to sleep again till Sunday."

There will be pompons, cheerleaders, Mexican waves, and balloons will descend from the ceiling of the Cliffs Pavilion for the entertainment of the YCs. About 800 of the 9,000 members, aged from 17 to 35, are expected.

But if it is such fun, why aren't all the young pulling on their Vivienne Westwood corsets or cheesecloth flairs and boogying on down to Southend? The problem is, the YCs are seen as deeply untrendy. However hard they try, they are not even hip among those who vote Conservative.

Wandering around Covent Garden in central London, it is hard to find many potential recruits. "I couldn't share a drink with them. They are so pompous, self-satisfied and smug," Ed Simms, 29, the marketing director of Austravel, says. "I don't see how you can be young and Conservative," Laura Brasher, a student aged 22, says. "It makes me embarrassed I went to private school. It's the unacceptable face of the young middle class, isn't it?" says her friend Cirsty Bell, 23.

Those who see YCs as a slightly warped social phenomenon imagine them dressed up in black tie and ball gowns, listening to Suzy Quattro. Others think of them as latter-day Mosleyites, politically intense because they are socially awkward — have you ever met a YC who can dance?

Mike Soutar, the editor of *Smash Hits*, the music magazine, thinks antipathy towards young Conservatives is part of a wider youth malaise. "Most young people have no interest in politics. With all those grey, bland, Identikit leaders, poli-



The image: a poster from the Young Conservatives' magazine, *Campaigner*, shows the way the future should look.

tics is seen as absolutely not the glamorous thing to be involved in," he says. "The recession is so deep that most young have given up thinking anything will get them out."

For a long time, all was not well in the nursery. The YCs got a reputation for consistently going beyond the bounds of good taste: there were "Hang Nelson Mandela" badges, they travelled to Nicaragua to visit the Contras, and then there was the "Get Well" card which they sent to General

Pinochet in Chile. Even the Conservative party's senior managers were worried about the unpredictability of the youth wing. In the late 1980s, the in-fighting between left and right was intense.

Youth conferences were thick with personal abuse and allegations of dirty tricks, as baby politicians wielded their mobile telephones and plotted against each other.

Last year's conference was dominated by milder accusations of train spotting. This

year, John Major has decided he has prior engagements. "There are just too many conferences. He cannot go to them all," an aide says. Even Conservative Central Office's press office shivers slightly when you mention the YCs.

But are all these accusations fair? Few people have recently attended a Young Conservative conference and, as Mr McLellan, 28, points out, much has changed in the past couple of years. "It irritates me tremendously that they all talk

about tweed jackets and booby hats or rabid politicians. The people who join the YCs now vary from underwriters to the unemployed. I wear casual trousers, an open-necked shirt and baseball cap to conferences," he says, and explains that there are now many young professionals who spread the Tory word round golf clubs and executive dining rooms and who see the YCs as a means of enhancing their career.

Mr McLellan, a sales man-



The reality: party faithful at a YC conference, notorious for being "damn good fun"

ager for ATI Laser Printers, joined the YCs when Margaret Thatcher was at the height of her power. "Most recent recruits joined because of Margaret Thatcher. There is no in-fighting now, we all have similar beliefs. We are firmly behind John Major, but we are more radical," he says. "We want further privatisation, voucher systems for school children's education and we are anti-Maastricht." Most are also avid believers in the free market, fighting all wrongs and advocate minimalist government, abolishing the welfare state and market reduction.

Mr McLellan does not merely want to be a Member of Parliament but a cabinet minister and an "implementer". If sheer drive has anything to do with it, he will probably get there. He gets up at 6 am every day, goes to bed at 2 am and covers about 750 miles a week going to talk at YC meetings. "As YCs, we get to network with ministers, MPs and local councillors and meet the movers and shakers."

Eleanor Elston, 19, the Bedfordshire YC chairman, was so disheartened when the then Mrs Thatcher was ousted as party leader that she decided to do something and set up a YC branch. "We go ten-pin bowling, hold discos and discuss current affairs. You want to shake young people sometimes. They are so apathetic and laid back. They criticise the government but they don't bother to question the issues or think of any alternatives," she says.

Conor Pickering, a cords and tweed jacket man, represents the second strand of the Conservative youth movement, Conservative Students, which has 10,000 members

and 120 branches. "Most students join for the active social life. We don't sit up discussing Marx until 4 am, we go out to restaurants. And we don't agree with the way that student politics are run where everyone has to be a member of the union and AGMs are taken up discussing the rights of Nicaraguan coffee growers," Mr Pickering, 22, says. "Noble causes are all

fered from the image of being a marriage bureau and full of upper class twits," he says. "Now they are professionals who work hard and play hard."

He believes that YCs have got over their problems and are now a happy, broad church. "My colleagues are beginning to value the Young Conservatives again. They do a lot of the footslogging in elections and they are a useful think-tank."

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Great Western Revived

For some, the
railway franchises
announced this
week recall the
golden age of steam



Puffed up: a GWR loco leaves Paddington station

Nobody born since January 1, 1948, could possibly remember the Great Western Railway, the legendary "GWR". Mr Major, however, wants to bring the company back to life, as one of the first franchises in the privatisation of British Rail.

The old Great Western used to run from Paddington to Penzance, with branches to Bristol, Birmingham, and the better part of Wales. Its trains, made up of carriages painted in chocolate and cream, were pulled by dark-green engines with funny brass scuttles on the boiler, and evocative names like "Clun Castle", and "Lord of the Isles".

The Great Western is the company most favoured by railway buffs, and its locomotives can be glimpsed at Didcot by those en route to Oxford, and on the Dart and Severn Valley Railways.

What was it the GWR had that its rival companies did not? Critics would say "better public relations", especially in the 1930s, the last golden age of the train. Remember the "Cheltenham Flyer", the world's fastest train? Romantics, on the other hand, will point to the destinations served. There were the countless photographs of King and Castle Class engines steaming along the south Devon coast, the waves of the ocean lapping against the locomotives' driving wheels. To travel first class on the Cornish Riviera before the war was the equivalent of flying to New York

on Concorde. It had style.

But the Great Western was more than a mainline railway, with the "Bristolian" speeding between Paddington and Temple Meads along a billiard-table flat track built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel. It was a railway of branch lines of the kind made famous by Sir John Betjeman. Single-line railways over which ran ancient engines pulling a train of three coaches, stopping at "halts" along the way, stand-

ing in country stations, simulating hobby brass ketles in the summer sun.

Towards the end of the 1930s, other railway companies began to overtake the Great Western in popular esteem. The London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), built streamlined Pacific class locomotives, and its "Mallard" set the world speed record; the LMS, London Midland Scottish built the "Coronation Scot", and the race to Scotland between the LMS and the LNER stole the headlines.

But the GWR made a virtue out of its refusal to change. Its carriages had not changed colour since before the Kaiser's war, and its engines, new in the early 1930s, looked much the same in 1939. In fact the Castles and Kings survived, with modest improvement, until the end of steam.

The GWR was just more efficiently run than its rivals. It was safe, fast and comfortable. As the Rev W. Awdry, the author and train-buff, put it: "There are two ways of running a railway: the Great Western Way and the Wrong Way". This view enabled the traditions of the GWR to survive for at least 20 years after the railways were nationalised in 1948. Indeed, in the early 1960s, with the return of the original liveries, it seemed as if the Great Western had never disappeared.

JULIAN CRITCHLEY
The author is MP for Aldershot.

Life and how to survive it — by John Cleese and Robin Skynner

ALL tickets have been sold for the Times/Dillons forum on February 24, at which John Cleese and Robin Skynner will speak. The forum coincides with the publication of their book *Life and How to Survive It*.

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Week two of our introduction to notaphily, the fascinating hobby of collecting paper money. In the past two years, 20 new eastern European nations have emerged and with them a host of new banknotes. To mark this changing face of eastern Europe, *The Times* has joined forces with *The Sunday Times* to bring you two great opportunities to collect free banknotes.

Exit one friend stage left

Life is a drama for the playwright Simon Gray, famous for his chronicles of the intellectual world. But when drama borrows from life, he finds, people can get hurt

If all the world were a stage, and playwrights were the players, there would certainly be plenty of drama: seething conflict, boiling rages, imagined slights, and paranoid loathing of critics. To meet any living playwright — I cannot speak for the dead — is to enjoy, vicariously, lives crowded with tortured incident.

Nobody has written more graphically about the antics of putting on a play than Simon Gray, who made his *Unnatural Pursuit* — the three-hour BBC film of the diary he kept while his *The Common Pursuit* was staged in America — such a pleasure.

Alan Bates's grinning performance as Gray was monumentally hilarious, among a gallery of American characters who baffle and appall the English playwright. The earnest director, the uptight actors, the lady interviewer mercilessly parodied in a painted Texan who asks inane questions ("What do you write with?" "A quill pen") fails to pay the lunch bill, tries to seduce him, drives him off in her car when dead drunk and then prints a poisonous piece saying "Go home, Brit".

So I feel I am treading on eggshells when we meet in a quiet west London hotel. Gray's regular haven of solitude. I have seen him there before, contentedly lunching alone. But lately, he says, celebrities have started appearing. "I keep seeing Elvis Costello in the bar," he says, "drinking on about his string quartet. Perhaps they could put up a sign 'No semi-bearded men with glasses and nasal voices'."

He keeps theatrical hours, working till 3am, rising at noon. Afternoons this week have been spent pleasantly at a nearby recreation centre where his *Quatermaine's Terms* is in rehearsal, with Edward Fox recreating his poignant Quatermaine, Peter Barkworth, Clive Francis, Sarah Badel, and Kevin Billington directing. They open at Guildford on Tuesday.

Gray has a resolutely rumpled appearance. He does not drive a car or put on a dinner jacket, except when receiving awards, though he disapproves of awards. After years of living in suburban Highgate, with wife, son and daughter, he left home and wife (painful subject: keep off) three years ago and now lives with Victoria Rothschild in Holland Park. He no longer takes "bottled inspiration" from Glenfiddich — doctor's

orders — but as he says, the first glass of champagne before lunch is "the closest most of us get to happiness, especially after a certain age".

To be habitually portrayed by Alan Bates — who, even when dementedly drinking, smoking, shambling about and hallucinating, manages never to be truly repulsive, is lucky, Gray admits: "I mean, it could have been Bela Lugosi." On Bates's part, no greater concession can be imagined than to smoke as furiously as Bates (a former smoker in real life) has to when playing Gray. The two are close friends ever since *Butley* and *Otherwise Engaged*: Bates has always spoken Gray's lines as if they were his own.



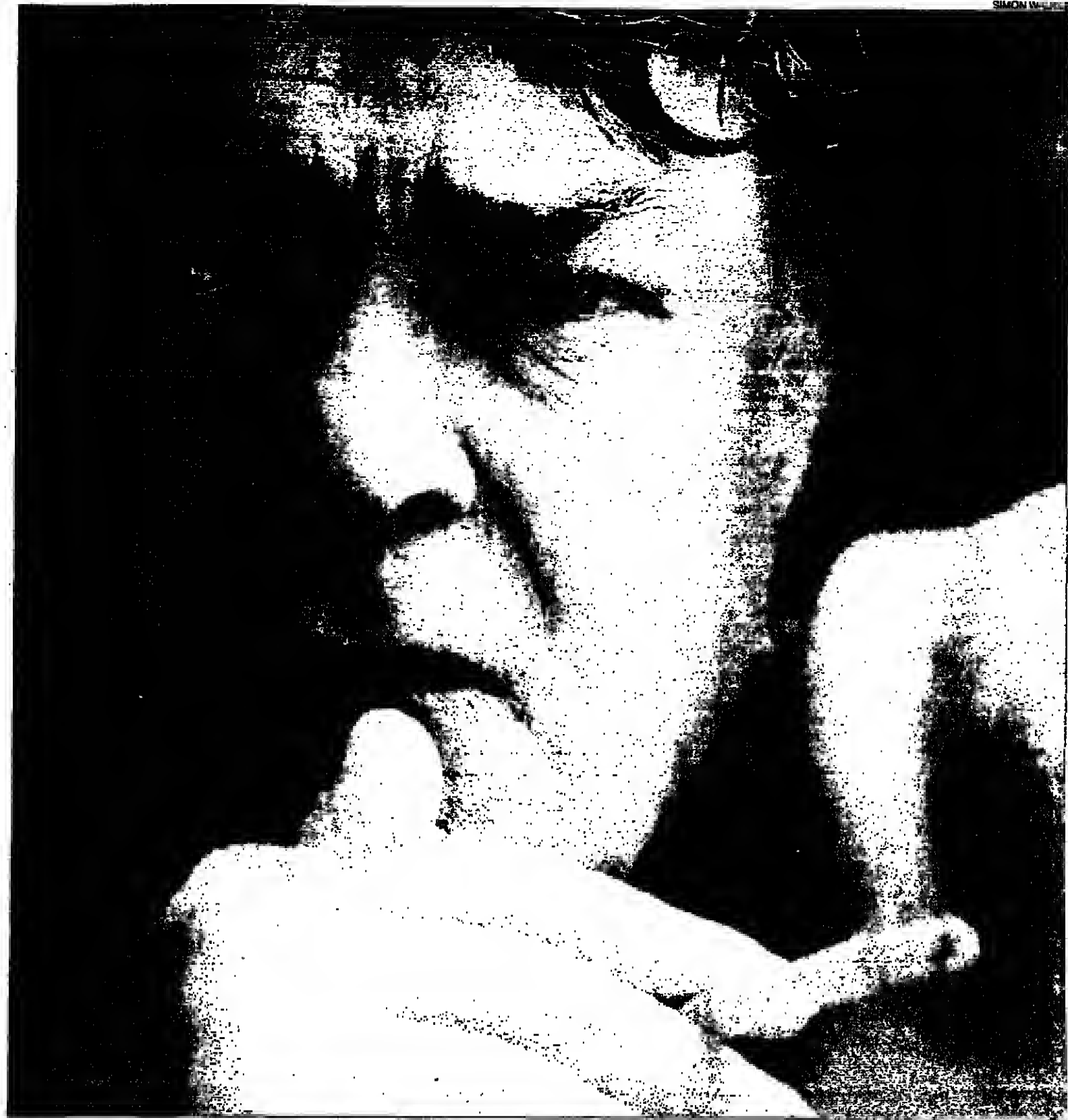
THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW

The old slanging match between dramatists and their critics is a perennial source of fascination. Each faction believes the other to be emotionally warped in some way. Gray duelled publicly with James Fenton over a review entitled *The Public Suicide of Simon Gray*, later taking his revenge in the *Times Literary Supplement*. John Osborne's "1st Battalion British Playwrights' Mafia" was a gesture of mass vengeance. David Hare wrote an open letter to Frank Rich, the *Butcher of Broadway*, accusing him of "personal nastiness" after his review closed Hare's *Secret Rapture*. Two years ago Gray's *Old Flames* on BBC2 featured a list of murder victims with familiar first-name names: Wardle, Shulman, Coveney, Nightingale... an in-joke which all could share.

Perhaps we should not be surprised when even writers who can be merciless prove that they also bleed. But now there is a new element of disaffection. Gray and Bates are two-thirds of a chronically successful triumvirate, of which the third man is Harold Pinter. Pinter directing Bates in a Gray play is the theatrical

Such are the hazards of the writer's life, where personal experience and work are so inextricably entangled. Gray's diary "Broadway Melody", about being in New York to write a musical of *Red Shoes* by the aged songwriter Jule Styne, was a narrative masterpiece. But, after it was published in *The Independent* on Sunday, Styne retaliated in *The New York Times*: Gray repudiated Styne's counter-attack. "That diary," Gray says, "did me more harm in America than anything."

If only everyone were as adept as dear Sir John Gielgud is at extricating himself from *faux pas*. Before Sir John did the televised *Quatermaine's Terms*, Gray recalls



Resolutely rumpled: for Simon Gray, the first glass of champagne before lunch is "the closest most of us get to happiness, especially after a certain age"

"He said to my agent, 'I've been sent that new Simon Gray play — dreadful, dreadful' — and then he had to face me, when he'd agreed to do it, over lunch." Whereupon Gielgud said he'd completely misunderstood the play, he thought it was about a prep school teacher.

Gray's work is seen as a hymn to Englishness, but in youth he felt like an outsider, having been whisked off to Canada in the war, where he and his brother, two "nannied, lipping middle-class English boys pitched among tough Canadian youths in lumber-jack shirts". They came home with that north American jagged, crewcut look. The re-anglicisation began when a schoolmaster named Foster one day read aloud, dramatically, from *Great Expectations*. Gray reveres Dickens to this day. From Westminster he went to university at Dalhousie in Nova Scotia, which he says gave him a far better education than Cambridge later did, despite his veneration for F. R. Leavis, with whom he had a gentleman's

agreement: "He wouldn't pester me for work, and I wouldn't pester him with my work."

For 20 years Gray taught English at Queen Mary College, London, until writing took over and he gave up the day job. "If I'd known," he adds, "in what a horrendous direction English studies were going, I would have stayed on,

just to block the job from some imbecile." He thinks the damage to the study of Eng lit by currently fashionable dogma amounts to "a calculated conspiracy to raise an underclass of illiterates who write in a language incomprehensible to anyone who hasn't been trained to be a deconstructuralist" — a way of murdering intelligence.

Gray will not be going back to Clinton's smoke-free America if he can help it. He was there six months ago directing a play that was steaming powerfully along in the previews: "And then Frank Rich's review came out — and we closed in 20 minutes."

Never mind: later this year sees a new Gray play, *Says I, Says He*, a two-hander about

the springing of George Blake. Meanwhile on Sunday night his *Femme Fatale*, is on BBC2. And *Quatermaine's Terms* will move into the Comedy Theatre directly after Pinter's fixed run of *No Man's Land*. It was of course Pinter who originally directed *Quatermaine*; but since Kevin Billington is Pinter's brother-in-law, it's still all in the family.

Fighting fear with innocence

I have been to Bosnia and back. If I had known nothing of what it was about to enter into a convoy of food and medical equipment, then ignorance and innocence would have been a good substitute for courage. As it was, from my first trip in December last year, I knew enough to expect the worst.

Baroness Chalker, the overseas aid minister, is right when she says there are many "do-gooders" in Bosnia who do not know what they are walking into, and I would not recommend anyone to go there without first finding out how best they can help. But it is my belief that without the "mavericks", thousands would be dying in Bosnia.

My second trip, in January, was with a small charity, and not one of the established agencies which Lady Chalker suggests do-gooders should work with. Our four trucks, set out from Dover carrying four tons of aid, and eventually we crawled down the coast of Croatia to Split. We attended the daily United Nations press conference to hear the latest details from the war zone. No one, we were informed, should travel at night.

Our destination behind the front line across the mined mountain roads to the isolated town of Travnik, where there was a desperate shortage of food, via Siroki Brijeg and Mostar, which were both being shelled. If we had left the aid in a warehouse in Split, we could not be sure that it would reach those who so needed it. So we decided to leave the next morning, in spite of the young army captain's reservations.

We crossed the front line in frightened apprehension. The rules were basic. Never get out of your vehicle: that is easy target practice. Never wind your British passport window: just show your windscreen. Never enter into conversation: shrug your shoulders and smile at the 22 checkpoints. We are British: peaceful, non-militaristic, non-aggressive. Keep the happy, with bribes if necessary. Keep the situation low-key and you might survive. Remember you have no friends here:

Sally Trench, below, says 'do-gooders' in Bosnia do saves lives



'Keep the situation low-key and you might survive. Remember you have no friends here'

the Croats are mining the roads to block the advancing Serbs. The Serbs are trigger-happy and reluctant to let aid reach the Bosnians. And the *Chezniks*, in the mountains, will hijack the convoy for the food they are desperately short of. Everyone is the enemy.

We drove on through the mortar fire, having dropped our first load of aid at a monastery in Siroki Brijeg which cared for 500 refugee children. We crossed the makeshift bridge over the dam, its four planks bending under our weight. We all knew we were sitting targets. We could see the heavy artillery in the mountains above us. We sped along the road, to where the Serbs had shot a small child and left her lying so the next vehicle that came along

was forced to stop. The driver was a Canadian photographer who made the mistake of leaving his car to help. They shot him in the back.

Ten miles from Sarajevo, at a village called Tarcin, there were 20,000 refugees. They had been constantly shelled for five days and nights. All the roads to Travnik were mined or blown up. We were resigned to going no further, so took our aid to the Tarcin warehouse and, under mortar fire, in the darkness, formed a human chain to unload our food. The warehouse was almost empty — the Bosnian refugees told us that they had only enough flour left to make bread for two days.

On returning to Split, UN officials asked us about the military situation so that they could update their facts for the following day's press conference. Lady Chalker says that the army in Bosnia told her about several "very nearly disastrous situations", where independent aid workers have put soldiers' lives at risk because the soldiers had to help them.

In our time behind the front line, we saw only two British vehicles at a Serb checkpoint, where we were harassed by two dozen armed soldiers. We signalled to the British for help: they refused to leave their vehicles, waved and scuttled away. The army captain appeared mortified when we told him this tale, and he apologised.

We were told that the road back to the Austrian border was under shelling at Zadar and that the Croats were laying mines. But we were too emotionally and physically exhausted to care. I led the convoy, driving like the clappers now that our trucks were empty. Taking a sharp left at speed, the trucks behind flashed and hooted me. I had missed the sign declaring the road was mined. I was so tired that instead of carefully reversing, I practised my three-point turn. Incredibly, I survived and raced towards the Austrian border.

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Janet Daley



The appeal of workfare to Tory backbenchers is based more on instinct than a grasp of economic realities

The prime minister, beleaguered on all sides by dire economic news, has floated off into the happier realms of abstraction. His government having been charged with two basic flaws — being incompetent and having no ideas — John Major has clearly decided that the latter is easier to remedy. Indeed, there was a different idea in virtually every paragraph of his Carlton Club speech. Unfortunately, coming as they did in a single-file procession, it was possible for the later ones nearly to contradict the earlier: an end to defence but more reverence for the monarchy, and so on.

The idea attracting most interest contradicted Mr Major's most basic premise. Asserting first that true Conservatives do not believe in "big government", he then went on to suggest a classic piece of paternalistic manipulation. "Workfare" is not a new concept. Dismantling the dependency culture by putting dole recipients to work was a proposition put forward by Thatcherite think tanks. After all, Britain had a dependency culture when Americans were still in ideological short trousers. Sir Keith Joseph (as he then was) railed at the collapse of moral fibre caused by the welfare state when Bill Clinton was but a beardless draft-dodger.

In the British tradition of not capitalising on our inventions, working for your dole money was only exploited for the mass market by more enterprising politicians across the pond. Like many of our own innovations, it is now having to be re-imported under a foreign label. The furious reaction of Labour spokesmen to what was only a cautious note in the water from Mr Major, would suggest that this was a full-blown reneader that Tory policy designed to dismantle the very notion of a welfare state. But whether or not this is a remotely Conservative idea at all depends on how it is described.

If it is seen as a strike against the "something-for-nothing" society — a rousing summons to work rather than shirk — a clampdown on scrounging dole addicts who avoid making any contribution to economic life, then its appeal to Tory backbenchers is considerable. But that appeal is based more on inchoate moral instincts than a grasp of the economic reality which is required to underpin the kind of society in which they believe. For there is an equally persuasive account of workfare which snacks more of the social engineer than of the workhouse.

In the United States, the tradition of public works schemes being created to employ the jobless began with Franklin Roosevelt's

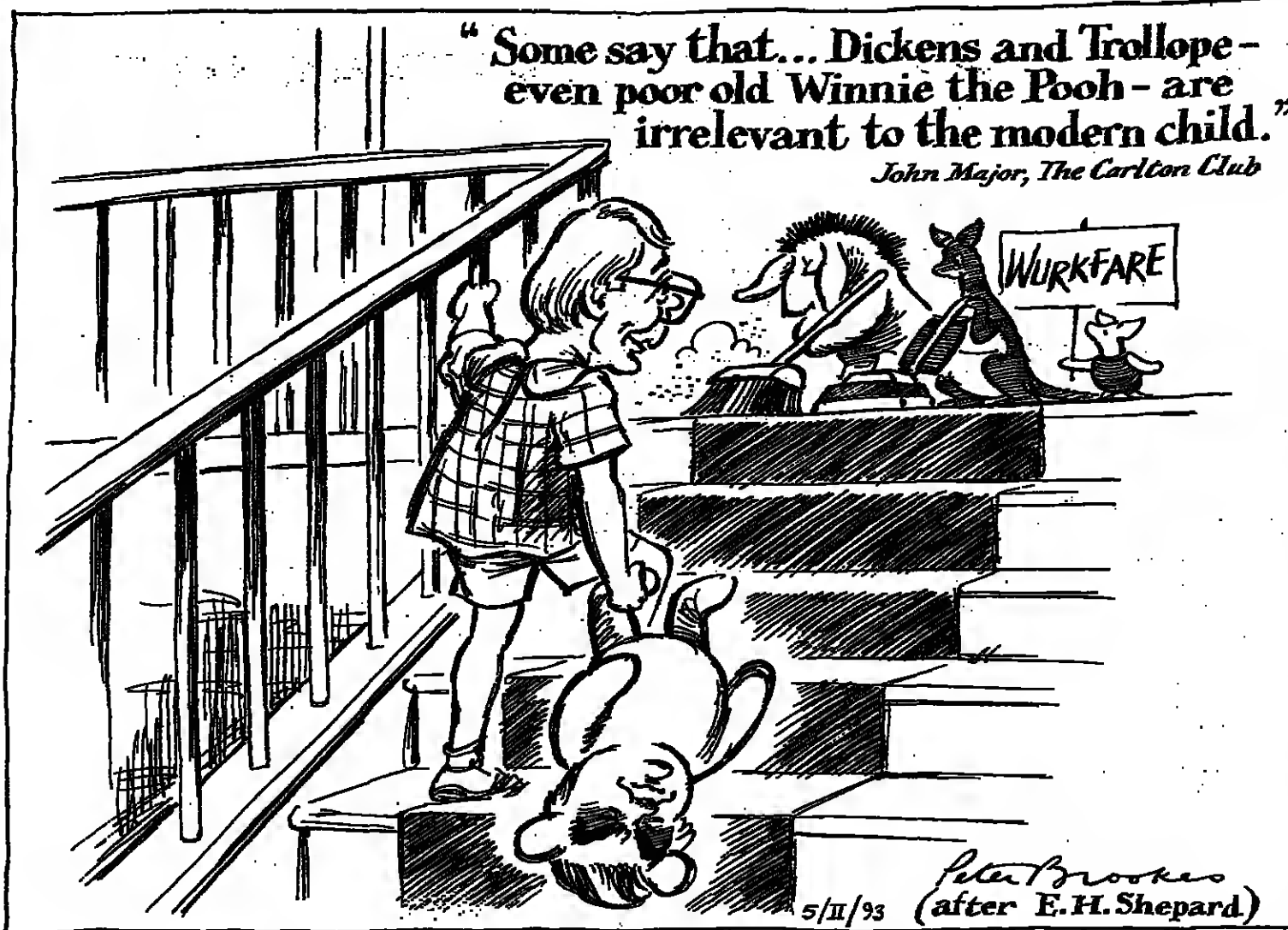
New Deal. Projects like the Tennessee Valley Authority hired thousands of construction workers to bring hydro-electric power to a backward rural area. The Civilian Conservation Corps involved unemployed youth in planting trees — one of the very tasks, by coincidence, suggested by Lord Tebbit for a British workfare scheme.

Roosevelt was idolised by a generation of working-class people in America who saw him as their saviour, and loathed by the plutocratic classes who saw him as the devil incarnate. In truth, he was simply a patrician Fabian. What he indisputably was not, was a rampant free-marketier. Making useful activity for the idle hands of the unemployed was not a punitive cure for the work-shy in Roosevelt's America. It was a humane bit of economic interventionism which red-blooded capitalists detested.

In the Alice in Wonderland of present-day British politics, conservatives of both parties — and radicals of both parties — have more in common with one another than with their own front benches. This helps to explain the paradoxical nature of Mr Major's utterance, cryptic and tentative as it was, and the response to it by the Labour party, shrill and disproportionate as it was.

Quite incredibly, Labour's employment spokesman, Frank Dobson, actually praised Mrs Thatcher for having said, "What people want are real jobs in a real economy", which is the sentiment of a true free-market Tory. Unfortunately, he sullied this admirable piece of clear thinking by also saying, "The problem is not that people are unwilling to work. It is that we have a government that is unwilling to find them work." (Italics, needless to say, are mine.) So Mr Dobson manages to produce a statement at least as self-cancelling as any of Mr Major's rhetorical pirouettes.

Mr Major, who thinks he is a Conservative, really accepts the post-war consensus that it is up to the government to find work for people. Some Labour politicians who think that they are socialists of some sort, believe that anything other than real work is insulting and irrelevant to the real economic life of the market place. The irony — or the tragedy — of British economic life is that half of what everybody is saying is right, or at least coherent. What many people want are real jobs in a real (which is to say, a capitalist) economy. Those who don't are a different sort of social problem who will not march off happily to plant trees any more than they would present themselves for real jobs even if they existed.



Long live the royals

Would you want a Britain in which MPs are the last resort of democracy?

Greatly to my own astonishment, I propose to write about the royal family. I do realise, of course, that others have done so before me, and I gather that whole books have been written on the subject: experts in these matters also assure me that in addition to the books there have been a considerable number of newspaper articles as well, so what is there for me to say?

Well, I do have one small advantage, in that I have read none of the books in question — indeed, I am almost sure that I have not so much as opened any of them — and I cannot now remember how long ago it was that I actually finished one of the articles.

This, you must surely agree, is the very best position from which to write about our royalty. The royal family today is subject to a wide variety of problems, though only a very few years ago none of these was widely known about, nor was there anything like the considerable hostility which clearly exists today. (King Farouk of Egypt once said that in a few decades there would be only five kings in the world: the king of England and the kings of spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs. He would not have made that exception if he was jesting today. Indeed, he wouldn't be jesting at all.)

Some of the members of the family have plainly contributed, however understandingly, to the hostility or at least the indifference which now greets references to them. Consider only the remarkable number of divorces and separations to which they have been party; probably, if it were an ordinary family living by the local social services, the lot of them would by now have been taken into care. How has this state of affairs come about, and what, if anything, can be done about it? And, while I am about it, does it matter?

I take first the question of divorce: not because it is the most important thing, but because it gives the most vivid picture of what has gone wrong. Our royalty goes back a long way; it is impossible to believe that all our monarchs have always loved their consorts and continued to do so throughout their lives; the same must be true of the whole family. But only now, it seems, do the members of the family parade their marital difficulties in public, going all the way to the once unthinkable point of divorce.

It can be argued that the present situation is more honest; once upon a time the rule in private was mistress

and paramours, lovers and adulterers, while the rule in public was unblemished and enduring marriage. Now who will dare to say that the royals should set the example, when half the marriages in the land are coming apart without anyone even noticing or caring about what is happening under the Queen's roof? So today, when royal marriages come apart, the formal breakdown of the coupling is done in the most piercing, unflinching and public way: there should be a special private ceremony called The Severing of the Ties, and a bearded nation shakes its head, and wonders what things are coming to. As the nation did, even more wonderingly, when the pictures of the Duchess of York canoodling were published: I remembered the unkind verse that the rabble sang to Queen Caroline when George IV was trying to get rid of her, and I realised that it could be used again with a minimum of alteration:

Oh gracious Ferg, we thee implore
To go away and sin no more
But if the effort be too great
To go away at any rate.

But the divorces and separations did real damage to the palace, not from shocked people deploring divorce, but from a feeling, however unfair, that a royal family should keep its tribe in order. Once, of course, they had wise advisers, whose wise advice was followed, but the Things the Queen now seems to rely on could and should be hanged at the yardarm and buried five fathoms deep with nothing but good ensuing. She could do it with impunity, and there would be an immediate improvement in the general respect for the monarchy.

For instance, what Thing advised the Queen to sue *The Sun* for, of all things, copyright, and then wait a month to do it? Which Thing made so stupendous a mess of the argument over the royal income tax? What Things have repeatedly failed to make clear how much work the Queen does — much of it consisting of hours upon hours of politely listening to bores so dreadful that I

cannot understand why she has not long since abdicated rather than entertain yet another; *mutatis mutandis* the same is true of the rest of the family.

But these matters are frequently discussed; what is not discussed is how the present situation came about. I have a theory, of course.

At some point, perhaps after the great success of the jubilee, the royal family made a historic decision: they would come down off their thrones and thrones, and show themselves to be human beings just like their subjects. It was a truly royal decision, and the carrying out of it was carefully done; after all, we were three-quarters of the way through the century, and to go on trying to believe that the royals were of another race entirely was becoming increasingly difficult. But it was a colossal mistake. Once the figures had stepped down out of the golden coach, they became fair game; until then, they were made of china, gingerbread, gold and silver, clouds, regal smiles, sceptres, glitter, understanding and history. Now they were made of the same flesh as the Queen's subjects, and in due course could be portrayed regularly and unpleasantly in *Spitting Image* (which began in 1984) and abused in the pages of the less expensive newspapers. What the royal family forgot, or more likely decided to ignore for the best of reasons, was that:

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
It must be obvious that the genie cannot be put back into the bottle; if the royal family tried to get back to its remoteness it would only make things worse: they would be charged with knowing nothing about the lives of ordinary people, and accused of selfishness, indifference and even stirring their tea anti-clockwise.

There is no serious republican movement in this country, though it is not impossible that one may arise. Jack Straw, MP, and Marjorie Mowlam, MP, might think of constituting a dual monarchy, but to put it as kindly as possible, they would be rather better qualified for selling door-to-door plastic-bound Filofaxes on commission.

Lord St John of Fawsley, when he had been on a committee concerning the royal finances, said very wisely "We can have a grand monarchy, or we can have a mean monarchy." If you think we could have a mean monarchy, just contemplate those northern royals who go about on bicycles, not because they are kept impoverished by their politicians, but because they think that it is their duty to be like their subjects, and that since their subjects go about on bicycles they should do the same; no greater misapprehension can be imagined.

Conquering kings their titles take for every person who knows where the line comes from, there must be a thousand who know only the spoonerism. We could, of course, dispense with our monarchy, without calling for tumbrils and guillotines; our peaceful lot would go quietly into retirement. But we would fall into two very dangerous traps. First, Heaven forbid that, having sent all royalty packing, we should have a head of state — some dreadful superannuated failure, to be found staggering about in the House of Lords. But if we do not have such a wretched simulacrum of royalty, we shall have only the politicians themselves to hold the ring.

Would you want a Britain in which the politicians not only run the country but also constitute the last resort of our democracy? If there is no check and balance above the politicians, however constitutionally bound, just stop and think what chicanery, what partiality, what mendacity, what pomposity, what dishonesty, what impudence, greed, folly, crookedness, vainglory, nest-feathering, excuses and plain bloody robbery would be practised on a helpless nation.

If that is what the end of monarchy would mean — and it would — we had better rejoice in our present arrangements, and do everything we can to ensure that the monarchy would not, so disdained, give up and dissolve itself. Failing that, we could call in Prince Shahanouk. Well, you must admit he would be a great deal better than Jack Straw and Marjorie Mowlam.

Bernard Levin

A dog of war again

MAULCOLM Rifkind's tactical retreat was greeted by a loud wail of delight from the dog kennel of the Staffordshire Regiment in Lichfield. Watchman III, a Staffordshire bull terrier, the regimental mascot, was expressing his approval.

Yesterday Watchman, who always receives a friendly pat on the head from the Duke of York, the colonel-in-chief, was recovering, along with many of his officers, from the impromptu celebrations marking the regiment that saved the regiment from the planned amalgamation with the Cheshires. After all, who's ever heard of a Cheshire bull terrier?

Major Mac McLean, regimental secretary, says: "We would have taken him with us whatever happened. We could never have given him up. He is the regiment." Watchman, who enjoys the rank of lance corporal, is now in line for promotion to celebrate the regiment's independence. McLean says: "I think the Cheshires would have loved him. But we would rather keep him all to ourselves." At the Cheshire regimental headquarters in Chester — the regiment is serving in Bosnia —

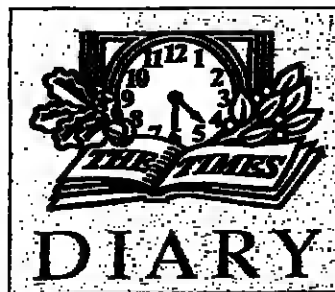
there was also great rejoicing. The reprieve has come just in time for the calendar: the 150th anniversary on February 17 of the 2,800-strong regiment's victory at Meenace, in Sind, India, against a Baluchi army of 30,000 men.

Major Tony Astle, secretary of The Cheshire Regiment Association, says: "The reunion to mark the event was due to take place at the Staffordshire barracks a week tomorrow. It would have been a wake, not a celebration. But that has all changed. The Cheshires may have drunk all the champagne in Bosnia but we may now be able to find a bottle or two here."

Bottoms up

ONE of Watchman's first official duties as the Staffordshire's independent mascot will be to accompany such top brass as Field Marshal Lord Bramall and the Duke of York to Tuesday's launch of *Rais Tales*, a book describing the regiment's role in the Gulf war.

The author, Nicholas Benson, a former member of the regiment and now a trainee solicitor, is still contemplating the repercussions of



the reprieve. "I will have great pleasure," he says, "in pointing out to the Duke of York that, thankfully, he was wrong when he wrote in the foreword: 'It may be that the Gulf war... will be the last campaign fought by the Staffordshire Regiment in its own name.'"

"The new speech will be celebratory," says Benson. "Now we can look forward to visiting the King's Head in Lichfield afterwards — that's the pub where Colonel Luke Lillingston founded the 38th of Foot, now the Staffordshire Regiment, in 1705. I just hope it won't be me buying the drinks."

Dole doubts

JOHN Major may not have made his mind up about workfare. But David Willetts, one of the inspirations of the Carlton Club speech,

has "I am ideologically opposed," says Willetts, the Tory MP for Havant.

Which is of some interest because Willetts was described by Major in his speech as "the newest addition to that distinguished list of conservatism's historians and philosophers".

Major's speech bore more than a passing resemblance to Willetts's book, *Modern Conservatism*, and *Bearing the Standard*, the first policy document of the Standard Bearers, a group of 10 new Tory MPs who wrote it in November 1991, before they were elected.

Neither the Standard Bearers, of whom Willetts is a member, nor his book mention workfare. And for good reasons, says Willetts, a former member of Baroness Thatcher's policy unit. "It's the nationalisation of unemployment. It is an acceptable state intervention. If there are idle hands, and unemployment, state intervention will distort the natural labour market."

FOR a moment, the collapse of Leyland DAF looked like a second blow to the Royal Shakespeare Company, still reeling from Royal Insurance's decision to relinquish its role as principal sponsor at the end of this year. Fortunately, however, the two vans that Leyland DAF gave the RSC last year were at

gift, not a loan. "It was a one-off gift and we were never expecting any more," says a spokesman. Much ado about nothing, then.

New flame?

WHILE Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Dr Michael Stroud march on across the South Pole, Lady Fiennes is conducting a candlelit vigil at her Exmoor farmhouse. The candle was a Christmas present from her husband.

Lady Fiennes was "astonished" when it arrived. "On Christmas Eve this huge van turned up with a big box in the back containing four wax candles, each about 4ft high. Ranulph had got in contact with his brother-in-law, who rushed around London and found the right ones."

So far she has burnt just one candle, which has been alight continuously since Christmas. Only four inches remain, enough, she believes, to last the 50 miles the two explorers have left.

Recent news about the deepening cold, frostbite and her husband's foot infection have left Lady Fiennes "concerned". But she is confident that they are experienced enough not to risk their lives unnecessarily. Besides, she is used to the effects of physical hardship on her husband, who lost the little toe

on his right foot after a previous expedition. "It fell off when he was in the bath. He put it on the side of the bath and forgot about it. It was quite a shock when I found it."

Walsden district council has discovered an ingenious way of enticing the "non-sporty" into exercise. Local GPs are prescribing swimming to patients whose ailments range from heart trouble to obesity. "The cost of swimming and general exercise is heavily reduced if it comes on prescription," says Michael Osborne, the Halshaw Leisure Centre's manager. "The irony is that these clients have become our most regular customers — the health freaks tend to give up after a while."



Tradition under threat

Robert Rhodes

James on the sad decline of trust

John Major was quite right, in his speech to the Carlton Club this week, to emphasise the need to bolster the institutions which give continuity and framework to our society. Of course, making fun of our national institutions is a traditional British pastime. Satire and pricking the balloon of pomposity have been a feature of our society for centuries. But the present climate is something totally new in my experience. The criticism is not good-humoured at all, and often vicious. The result has been a gradual but definite fall in public respect for, and trust in, almost every one of our institutions.

In the past the institutions that have been the objects of mockery have survived and even been improved by it. The monarchy has changed, but is still there; so is the House of Lords, the Church of England, our Law Courts, and system of law, the honours system, our military hierarchy, and a House of Commons that is ruled more by precedent and tradition than by standing orders. But when the police are trusted as little as politicians, and the morale of the Church of England is so low, and the monarchy might be in jeopardy, it is time to stop and ask ourselves what we are doing.

One institution which seems to think that it is impervious to this barrage is the press itself. The howls of outrage at the Calcutt report are more interesting than the report itself, which is deeply flawed and very much open to challenge. But although Calcutt may have hit the wrong targets and come up with the wrong solution, there is a widespread feeling that some sections of the media have gone too far.

It is one thing to expose the activities of people in high station, merely to prove the obvious point that they are human and fallible like the rest of us; it is quite another to pester grieving widows and families, and bombard innocent people with telephone calls, long-distance cameras, and journalists on the doorstep, eager to obtain a story, regardless of other people's feelings. By a curious coincidence, only newspaper proprietors seem exempt from these pressures, and the more cynical of us remember the late Randolph Churchill's comment that "sonofabitch don't eat sonofabitch". A situation in which you have to possess the money and nerve of a Jeffrey Archer to take on one of these colossi is a bad one.

Newspapers are ephemeral, stale once tasted. But what is happening is a constant drum-beat of denigration of the institutions rather than the imperfect people who run them. The facts are that we have a civil service of unquestioned integrity, judges and lawyers who believe deeply in justice, and the vast majority of Members of Parliament who are decent, honourable, and hard-working — but it would be difficult to understand this from our press. And now that institution itself is being regarded with increasing distrust, and even contempt.

Recession has opened another category of institutions, particularly the banks, to suspicion and fear and mistrust. As in the case of other institutions, much of this is justified, and Sir Jeremy Morse, chairman of Lloyds Bank, was right publicly to express his dismay at the mistakes that have been made and the low esteem in which his profession is held, just as others are right to lament the passing of old-fashioned business methods and the arrival of hard men to whom the only test of success is wealth, made by whatever means possible. This does not mean that all British businessmen are greedy and untrustworthy, but we only hear about the others.

Lady Thatcher had a point when she said that there is no such thing as "society", yet in fact she was wrong. British society is as subtle as our history, but we all know what it means. It is about people living together and getting on with one another, and obeying certain rules of conduct, and keeping the law. Americans and others continue to claim that Britain is riddled with class. It is not — especially not in Scotland. But the cement in our society, at every level, is trust. We are rapidly approaching the point when we feel we cannot trust anyone any more, and that our institutions have failed us — and not the other way round.

Pulling down fine old buildings is easy; building new ones is more complex. We are now more conservation-minded than ever about our old towns and villages, and our countryside, and not before time. We should now be very conservation-minded about institutions that have, after all, served us superbly in the past. They have been reformed, and have reformed themselves; none is incapable of change and improvement. But the relentless and irresponsible denigration of everything is fraught with danger. In Churchill's phrase, in another context, "Stop it! Stop it! And stop it now!" before we find that we have done irreparable damage not only to our institutions but to ourselves.

The author was Conservative MP for Cambridge 1976-92.



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Need for vision in nation's leader

The Prime Minister at last looks beyond today's troubles

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Russian science illuminates where its philosophy failed

Yesterday's luminous extravaganza was an open bid for Western money, signalling that Russian scientists will parade their spectacular wares until capital is found to back them. Their latest schemes include a plan to build missiles which fire aid relief into disaster areas, a laser spacecraft to repair the ozone layer and spaceships that sail on solar winds.

Not all will come to fruition. But from this new culture of scientific enterprise, dramatic innovation is sure to emerge. If the Strategic Defence Initiative was the last great invention of the Cold War, then yesterday's fantastic mission was the first breakthrough of a new world market in technological ideas. Where once there was darkness, let there be light. And what more appropriate symbol for one of communism's few good legacies than that it be all done by mirrors.

Need for vision in nation's leader

Business letters, page 23

Solutions for our economic ills

From Sir Samuel Goldman

Major 'right to defend his honour'

From Mr Richard Shegog

Air service restrictions

From the Chairman, Air Transport Users Committee

The Air Transport Users Committee has consistently supported the now largely successful campaign to liberalise services within the European Community. We have done so on the basis that competition provides the best available mechanism to ensure

Secret societies

From Mr Christopher Mullin, MP for Sunderland South (Labour)

Mr Levin writes: "... there is not one word in Mr Mullin's bill which explains why it is being introduced ..." When the bill was introduced last July 1, I made a ten-minute speech outlining the reasoning behind it. Had Mr Levin bothered to ask, I

Yours faithfully,
R. S. FRASER,
South View, Cliffside,
Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Your obedient servant,
GEORGE COOK.
9 Strait Lane,
Hurworth-on-Tees,
Co. Durham.
January 30.

longer term.
Yours faithfully,
NORMAN NICHOLSON,
Chairman,
Air Transport Users Committee,
2nd Floor, Kingsway House,
103 Kingsway, WC2.

would gladly have provided him with the relevant extract from Hansard.

Yours sincerely,
CHRIS MULLIN,
House of Commons.
February 2

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Friends and foes of Biggles

From Mr David Damant

From Mr D. M. Desoutter

Sir, Although W. E. Johns's acquaintance with T. E. Lawrence, alleged (report, January 28) to be the prototype for Biggles, was limited to only an hour or two of formal interviews, it was long enough for him to form a lasting dislike for the man. He considered Lawrence an outsider, rather than a fellow aviator, and he found homosexuality distasteful and morally objectionable.

Bill Johns, who was my friend and mentor for more than 30 years, abided by the old morality, and believed in honesty and straightness. He was also serious about careful research before publication, another of the old virtues whose loss he would deplore.

Air Commodore "Daddy" Probyn, a first war DSO, was still flying in 1981 and, in fact, flew himself in to his 90th birthday party, at Nyeri in Kenya, in a plane which he had built himself. His death, at the age of 100, was reported in *The Times* on March 27, 1992.

Weight of opinion

Yours faithfully,
SAMANTHA PEEL,
128 Christchurch Road,
Tulse Hill, SW2.
February 1.

Correct cooking

Yours faithfully,
JOAN BRINHAM,
6 Churchfields Avenue,
Weybridge, Surrey.
February 3.

COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM

February 4: The Queen this afternoon visited Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn, and, having been received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Norfolk (Mr Timothy Cunniff), the Queen, King's Lynn and Wisbech Hospitals NHS Trust (Sir Julian Lloyd), toured the hospital escorted by Mr Barry Starkey (Chief Executive, NHS Trust).

The Lady Susan Hussey, Sir Kenneth Scott and Major James Patrick were in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

February 4: The Prince Edward, President, the Lord's Taverners, this evening attended the "Gary Lineker Evening" at Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London W1.

Mrs Richard Warburton was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

February 4: The Princess Royal, Honorary President, Chartered Institute of Transport, today attended the International Council Meeting, Jury's Hotel, Balldubridge, Dublin, and was received by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Dublin (His Excellency Mr David Blatherwick).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

February 4: The Princess of Wales this morning received the Leader of the Opposition (the Rt Hon John Smith MP).

The Princess of Wales, Trustee, this afternoon attended a Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the

National Gallery, London WC2.

Miss Balinda Harley was in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE

February 4: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present this evening at the London Premiere of "Damage" at the Curzon West End Cinema, in aid of the Almeida Theatre.

The Hon Mrs Willis was in attendance.

YORK HOUSE

ST JAMES'S PALACE
February 4: The Duchess of Kent, Patron, the Cancer and Leukemia in Childhood Trust, this afternoon visited the Paediatric Oncology Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, and was met on arrival by Lady Young (Deputy Lieutenant of Oxfordshire).

Her Royal Highness later officially opened the CLIC Court, the new "home from home", 87 Jack Street, Lane, Headington, Oxfordshire.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE

RICHMOND PARK
February 4: Princess Alexandra, Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of the Light Infantry, this afternoon received Major-General M O Regan, Colonel of the Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel P R Sharland (5th Battalion) and Lieutenant Colonel P J Wykeham, Regimental Secretary.

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Concert given by the Young Musicians' Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1.

The Lady Nicholas Gordon Lennox was in attendance.

At the invitation of His Excellency

President Walesa, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will pay an official visit to the Republic of Poland in May.

Birthdays today

Major-General Sir Simon Cooper, 77; Mr Ian Findlay, former chairman, Lloyd's, 75; Lord Gibson, 77; Mrs Molly Hattersley, educationist, 62; Miss Susan Hill, novelist and playwright, 51; Professor Sir Alan Hodgkin, OM, former master, Trinity College, Cambridge, 79; the Hon Douglas Hogg, QC, MP, 48; General Sir Geoffrey Howlett, 63; Sir Denis Kennedy, chairman, Hoarewell, 58; Wing Commander R.A.B. Leary, VC, 80; Mr Justice Mordant, 55; Mr Frank Muir, writer and broadcaster, 73; Professor A.M. Neville, former principal and vice-chancellor, Dundee University, 70; Miss Charlotte Rampling, actress, 47; the Very Rev Colin Semper, former Provost of Coventry, 55; Sir Michael Simpson-Oribe, diplomat, 61; Sir Rodney Sweetman, orthopaedic surgeon, 66; Lord Williams of Moynry, QC, 52; Sir Leslie Young, former chairman, British Waterways Board, 68.

Appointment

Judge White to be Chairman of the County Court Rule Committee, succeeding Judge Stuart-White.

TEL: 071 481 4000



Harmony of hope: Sam Thi Nguyen, 27, and Alison White, 22, were among 60 young musicians auditioning in London yesterday for a chance to work and perform with the conductors Sir Georg Solti, Semyon Bychkov and Valerie Gergiev, by winning a place in the Schleswig Holstein Music Festival Orchestra. Successful candidates will spend eight weeks at Salzw, a lakeside castle near Kiel which is the summer music conservatory for the festival. Auditions for the 120 places in the orchestra are being held all over the world; Britain should get five

Service dinners

Royal Pioneer Corps
Brigadier C.B. Teller presided at the last central mess dinner of the Royal Pioneer Corps held last night at Simpson Barracks, Northampton, prior to the merger into the Royal Logistic Corps. The Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire and Major-General O.L. Burden were among the guests.

RCCT

Major-General J.D. MacDonald, Director General of Transport and Movements, and Officers of the Royal Corps of Transport entertained heads of industry and commerce at a dinner held last night at RCT Headquarters Mess, Aldershot.

Old Camdunian Club

Colonel P.J. Bamford presided at the Old Camdunian armed services annual dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club, Mr G.J. Thorpe was principal guest.

Dinner

Royal Society for Asian Affairs
The Turkish Ambassador was among the speakers at the annual dinner of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs held last night at the Savoy Hotel. Lord Darnley, president, presided and presented Mrs Odile Hourani with the Sir Percy Sykes Memorial Medal which was awarded to the late Albert Hourani. The Hon Douglas Hurd, MP, and Sir Michael Wilford also spoke.

Latest wills

Oliver Shewell Franks, Baron Franks of Headington, Oxford, former Ambassador to Washington, and chairman of numerous committees, left estate valued at £2,702,791 net.

University news

Oxford
University prizes
The George Webb Madley Essay Prize 1992 was won by Liam Brunt.

The Weldon Memorial Prize 1992 was won by Professor George Oster.

Queen's Belfast

The following honorary degrees to be awarded this year:

Doctor of laws: The Rev Dr Michael Hurley, for services to the community; Brian Keenan, for services to humanity; Charles Kinahan, for services to the university and to architectural heritage in Northern Ireland.

Doctor of literature: Edith Devlin, for services to adult education; Jennifer Johnston, for distinction in literature; Peter McKie, for services to the chemical industry

Churchill College

The 1993 Stephen Roskill Memorial Lecture was delivered on Wednesday, February 3, by Admiral Sir Julian Oswald, GCB, ADC, the Chief of Naval Staff and First Sea Lord on the topic of "Roskill Revisited: Maritime Strategy in the Twenty-first Century". The Master, Professor A.N. Broers, presided. Among those present were:

Mr J.G.P. Crowden, Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Leving of Grenville, the Right Hon the Lord Roskill and Lady Roskill and other members of the Roskill family, Professor the Lord Adrian and Lady Adrian, Sir Christopher Francis, Professor Colin Adams, Admiral Sir Hugo White, Admiral Sir John Kerr, Professor Sir Harry and Lady Hildesley, Professor Sir Hermann and Lady Bond, General Sir Charles Guthrie, Sir Robert Hildesley, the Hon Mrs Keymer, Sir Chief Marshal Sir Roger Pullin, Air Marshal Sir John Willis, Mr Mervyn Stewart, Vice Admiral E.W. Clouston JSC, USN, and Mr Peter Sawo.

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Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister 1834-35 and 1841-46, Bury, Lancashire, 1788; Dwight Moody, evangelist, East Northfield, Massachusetts, 1837; John Boyd Dunlop, pioneer of the pneumatic tyre, Dremphart, Strathclyde, 1840; Captain W.E. Johns, author, Hertford, 1893; Adlai Stevenson, American statesman, Los Angeles, 1900.

DEATHS: Thomas Carlyle, writer and historian, London, 1881; A.B. (Banjo) Paterson, Australian folk poet and author of *Waltzing Matilda*, 1941; George Arliss, actor, London, 1946; H.M. Tompkins, novelist and essayist, London, 1958; Emeric Pressburger, film producer, Suffolk, 1988.

Church in Wales

The Rev Canon Peter Wilfred Woodman, Vicar of the Caerwent group of parishes, to be also Archdeacon of Monmouth.

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Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal, as Patron of SENSE, the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, will visit Elmfield House, Greystoke, Avenue, Westbury-on-Trym, at 11.30; and, as Patron of the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, will visit the Northway Bureau, Yale Leisure Centre, Kennedy Way, at 1.05.

Church news

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BY GEORGE SIVELL, CITY EDITOR

last Monday, Lasmo sold North Sea assets worth £105.8 million to Deminex UK, a German company in which BASF is a significant shareholder. The assets include interests in 17 North Sea blocks, including forthcoming production, near-term developments and exploration acreage. The assets also include Lasmo interests in the Bruce, Keith and M fields and a 25 per cent interest in block 16/12a, which contains the so-called "tree" fields. The money from Deminex will be received in two halves; £52.9 million will be paid in cash on

Tempus, page 23



BY PHILIP PANGALOS

He added that proceeds from the rights issue will enable Allied to cut debts and invest in new growth areas. Mr Carr also intends to split the roles of chairman and chief executive and give up the post of chairman. A successor is being sought.

The interim dividend is cut to 1p, against 1.5p last time, as the company reported a 24.8 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £1.24 million in the 25 weeks to January 3. Turnover grew 8 per cent to £11.5 million, helped by the opening of two bowling centres, bringing the total to 15. Earnings slip to 2.92p a share, down from 3.69p.

However, Richard Carr

BY PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

PAY settlements in manufa

The CBI said that since last August, a third of all employers have introduced pay freezes.

MOTOR World Group, the car parts and accessories retailer and manufacturer, is attempting to take advantage of the buoyant stock market by gearing up for a flotation next Thursday. The £12.5 million placing of 5.97 million ordinary shares through Beeson Gregory, at 210p a share, represents 45.3 per cent of the issued capital. At the placing price, the group would be capitalised at £27.7 million.

Motor World runs a network of 180 low-cost outlets stretching from the North of England to the Midlands and Wales, operating away from high streets. About £3.2 million will be used to redeem existing preference shares and about £9 million will repay debt. Motor World made a pre-tax profit of £2.29 million in the year to November 1, 1992, on turnover of £34.2 million. Based on the pro forma earnings, the p/e multiple at the placing price is 13.1. Gearing will be cut from 360 per cent to about 12 per cent. *Temmas, page 23.*

KWIK-SAVE, the cut-price supermarket group, has announced a ground-breaking move into Scotland, and expansion in London and the South East. Graeme Seabrook, chief executive, said the group, which has 80 sites in the South East, would like to open a further 100 outlets in the region. The move will create 2,500 jobs eventually. Mr Seabrook said Kwik-Save would also like to open 100 sites in Scotland as soon as possible.

Wheway chief goes

MENVIER-SWAIN Group, the emergency lighting and fire alarm company, is to acquire Nugelec, a French fire alarm group, for £10.55 million in cash and shares, to be funded via a £9 million rights issue. Shareholders are being offered one new share for every eight held, at 520p against an existing price of 605p. Menvier made £3.2 million (£2.77 million) pre-tax profit in the six months to end-October, with earnings of 14.9p (13.3p) a share. The interim dividend is 3.3p (2.7p).

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Kingfisher in French bid talks

Continued from page 19

in Financière Dary, a management buyout vehicle that took over the company in May 1988. The Dary family holds 25 per cent of Financière and institutions, including Cr  dit Lyonnais and Banque Nationale de Paris, have 19 per cent.

Nigel Whitaker, an executive director of Kingfisher, said the group had made no secret of its desire to expand overseas, given the strong shares held of its two main specialist markets in Britain, electrical goods and do-it-yourself through the B&Q operation. He said the deal offered the ownership of one of the most profitable electrical retailers in the world, a market leader in France, and with a management keen to do the deal. But Kingfisher would not commit itself unless the price was right.

Mr Whitaker refused to discuss the funding of the deal or its structure. While the market remains concerned about a possible rights issue, Kingfisher's gearing is now as low as 10 per cent or less and borrowings are about £100 million.

Nick Bubb, retail analyst at Morgan Stanley, said the deal was an excellent one for Kingfisher, but he was sceptical whether the two parties could reach agreement at a price acceptable to either. "Dary will only sell out at a huge price, and Kingfisher will never pay it."

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OECD warns Britain against giving up anti-inflation drive

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN must put the task of restoring the credibility of its anti-inflation drive at the top of its agenda and ensure the weaker pound does not result in higher inflation, says the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

In its latest report on Britain, the OECD gives warning that, without monetary discipline conferred by an independent central bank, the government must resist the temptation to give up its medium-term aim of low inflation by giving in to political pressure "to support economic growth in the short term". It also warned the government to rein in the Budget deficit.

"Should a more aggressive approach to reducing interest rates be taken and/or current efforts to restrain government expenditure be less successful than planned, higher inflation would likely result, as sterling weakened and a domestic price and wage spiral built up. Output would be stronger for at most a brief period."

The OECD forecasts that Britain will return to growth this year, with a rate of 1.3 per cent, rising to 2.4 per cent in 1994. However, consumer prices will also rise to 5.2 per cent this year before falling

back to 4.2 per cent in 1994. It forecasts manufacturing output rising only 1 per cent this year and 2.3 per cent in 1994, and unemployment increasing to 10.8 per cent of the workforce this year, falling to 10.5 per cent in 1994. Domestic demand is predicted to rise only 0.6 per cent, simply reversing the decline of that magnitude in 1992.

The OECD was optimistic on inflation: Britain's underlying performance ought not to deteriorate significantly. "Given the large output gap and continuing disinflation in the system, the initial effects of a lower exchange rate on inflation should be muted. Indeed, disinflation should resume once the effects of depreciation pass through."

This positive outlook would be at risk if the government allowed the depreciation to pass into inflation expectations and compensatory wage claims.

The report said the outlook was more than usually clouded by uncertainty. For example, the OECD said it was not sure how close the personal sector was to bringing its finances back to health after the borrowing spree of the 1980s. High household

debt was one factor cited in trying to explain why recovery had not materialised this year. "The failure of the economy to recover even modestly following the April election confounded the predictions of virtually all forecasters and analysts," it said.

Positive highlights of the report included the fact that business investment had held up relatively well during this recession, compared with previous ones, and that exporters should be well set to gain market share when world trade picks up this year and next. The OECD expressed surprise that companies had maintained such high dividend payouts during the recession.

The report applauded various supply-side reforms undertaken during the 1980s but urged more, particularly further improvements in vocational training, further tightening-up of regulation of privatised firms to ensure profits were achieved through efficiency rather than market position, and, particularly pertinent in the run-up to the Budget, broadening the VAT base to those zero-rated items such as food and household energy.



Lawyer on trial Thomas Ward "was promised a success fee" for his work with Guinness

Saunders had 'global dream'

By JON ASHWORTH

ERNEST Saunders dreamed of using the takeover of Distillers as the platform for a global empire with offices in London and New York, an Old Bailey jury heard yesterday.

William Dwyer, a Beverly Hills lawyer, told the court of the "Park Avenue dream" that inspired Mr Saunders, former chairman and chief executive of Guinness, after the brewing group was cleared to launch a fresh bid for Distillers in March 1986.

Mr Dwyer, 57, was giving evidence in the trial of Thomas Ward, an American lawyer

who played a key role in the Guinness takeover bid for Distillers. Mr Ward, 53, denies stealing £5.2 million from Guinness. He claims the money represented a legitimate success fee for his work during the bid.

The court heard that over dinner at the Piccadilly Hotel, central London, Mr Saunders drank champagne and spoke of building a London-based company with a strong American outpost headquartered in New York.

Mr Dwyer claimed Mr Saunders had said: "Money

talks, Will, and I've sort of got my man here in Ward." He also claimed that Mr Saunders had said that whatever it took, they would have the money within Guinness to pay it.

Earlier that evening, according to Mr Dwyer, Mr Ward had told him that he had been promised a success fee of "one fifth of one per cent" of the value of the bid. Mr Dwyer was promised a share but the exact amount was not specified.

The trial was adjourned until today.

HK Land tops up stake in Trafalgar

Hongkong Land revealed yesterday that it has exercised its option to acquire a further 5.2 per cent of Trafalgar House, taking its shareholding to 20.1 per cent.

Hongkong also has an option, which expires on May 3, to take it up to 29 per cent. But with Hongkong paying a maximum of 85p a share, it is difficult to see how the put option will be exercised. Trafalgar shares slipped 1 1/2 p to 92p.

DC Cook passes

DC Cook, the motor dealer, has passed its interim (0.2p) after £56,000 losses before tax in the half-year to end-October (£107,000 profit). British operating profits fell from £1.36 million to £883,000 but losses in Spain went from £124,000 to a £57,000 profit.

Bostrom buys

Bostrom, the vehicle seating and specialist engineering group, is acquiring AJW Holdings, an engineer, for up to £2.14 million, depending on future profits, with £1.79 million satisfied by 1.41 million new Bostrom shares, placed by Kleinwort Benson with institutional investors at 127p. Bostrom expects to recommend a 3.5p final, making an unchanged 6.0p to end-December 1992.

Abtrust rights

Abtrust Preferred Income Investment Trust is raising £16.4 million through a rights issue of new ordinary income shares and new zero dividend preference shares. They have been conditionally placed by Greig Middleton, but shareholders can subscribe for ten new income shares for every nine already held, at 83p. Shareholders are also offered one new zero preference for each existing share held, at 142p. Abtrust expects to pay a 2.9625p fourth interim at end-July in lieu of a final, making 11.625p.

Nestlé factory closure threatens jobs

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

Nestlé Rowntree, the international food and drinks group, is to stop production at its biscuit factory in Glasgow. The group, which employs 550 people making Breakway and Blue Riband biscuits at the plant, is transferring the work to a more modern factory at Fawdon, Newcastle upon Tyne.

With ironic timing, Nestlé is switching the production of Lion Bars from Newcastle to Dijon in France, where workers have been protesting over a decision by Hoover to move production of its components from Dijon to Cambuslang

on the outskirts of Glasgow. Nestlé's Glasgow plant will phase out production over the next two years and seek a buyer for the factory and the remaining Gray Dunn biscuits business, to try to secure some continued employment in Glasgow. The company said it was too early to say how the decision would affect jobs. But jobs are clearly under threat.

Graham Miller, the Nestlé managing director, said the company was committed to setting up a jobs task force backed by £250,000 to provide assistance and advice for Glasgow employees affected by the decision.

Richard Leonard, of the Scottish Trades Union Congress, said the STUC

wanted a requirement for multinational companies that relocated to Britain to give some guarantee of job security. "No one really wins on the multinational roundabout. But it is often easier for companies to close businesses in Britain than on the Continent."

Alex Neil, Scottish National Party economic spokesman, said: "It is ironic these jobs are ultimately going to Dijon. This circular shifting of redundancies round Europe shows the need for European legislation to protect workers and communities, to prevent multinationals playing one workforce off against another."

Social dumping row, page 8

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Merchant banks prepare for thaw in acquisition ice age

The dearth of takeovers during the recession has left finance houses short of fees, but William Kay detects the first signs that spring is in the air

The last two years have been an ice age for merchant banking, particularly their front-line troops in the corporate finance departments. Some have seen so little activity that they have been metaphorically counting their fingers and toes each morning. Now, though, they must hope the big freeze is finally thawing out.

This year we have already had a brief contest for Evode, the adhesives group. A slightly improved but still unwanted offer by Wassall was promptly and crushingly topped by a £135 million clincher from Lapone. More controversially, Airco has put up £211 million to buy Owners Abroad in the teeth of a planned share exchange between Owners and Thomas Cook.

While neither of these middling-sized deals has either the air of excitement or the fees of Sir James Goldsmith's unsuccessful attempt to buy BAT Industries for a mere £13 billion in 1989, they at least dangle the prospect of some relief from the arctic conditions of the past two years. The BAT battle formed part of a record £55 billion aggregate value of public takeovers bids four years ago. By 1991, the recession had taken the figure to £10 billion, and last year's score was a mere £7.5 billion. A large proportion of even that meagre tally came from Tomkins' 1995 million takeover of RHIM, the milling and baking group.

As merchant banks can earn millions from one transaction, the dearth of such deals has had a severe impact on the sector. Elegant City lunch rooms have echoed to such questions as What are we here for? How far should we diversify, if at all? How aggressively should we risk our capital when clients quibble every penny of our fees?

The effect of all this has been to widen the gap between the large and small merchant banks. And the most obvious demonstration of that gap has been their different abilities to continue to employ so many people.

Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, estimates that 200 corporate financiers lost their jobs last year. Given that the top 20 banks account for the vast proportion of the business, that is grim. Many of the good bankers and brokers have stayed with or gravitated towards the big battalions. Only last month, Kleinwort Benson recruited two people from Baring Brothers for their growing securitisation team. But even a name as prestigious as Kleinwort's is not enough to prevent departures. Laurie Paulsen, until January 1 the head of equity sales, has jumped ship to run an out-of-town office for Fidelity, the American-owned fund management group.

One merchant bank that has found a way of recruiting big names without mortgaging the family silver is Singer & Friedlander, which failed last year to merge with Henry Ansbacher & Co.



On board: Singer has brought in Timothy Lyons, left, and Jonathan Stolerman, structured finance experts

According to Hemmington Scott, publisher of the *Hambro Company Guide*, Singer has just 22 plc clients, placing it 17th by that measure. But it has been attracting some glittering names.

In 1991, Singer took a 51 per cent stake in Collins Stewart & Co, a newly formed stockbroker. The venture was based around four former partners of Simon & Coates, a broking firm bought by Chase Manhattan Bank in the run up to the Big Bang deregulation of the London stock market.

Last month, Collins Stewart snapped up Terry Smith and David Poutney, the banking analysts, from UBS Phillips & Drew. Mr Smith quit P&D in a row over his book, *Accounting for Growth*, and Mr Poutney followed. Before Christmas, Singer also beat several other contenders for an ex-Morgan Grenfell unit trust team headed by Tony Fraher and Simon Ballard. And last week, it formed another new operation, Singer & Friedlander Capital Markets, specifically to house Timothy Lyons and Jonathan Stolerman, a high-flying duo in the arcane world of structured finance. Lyons and Stolerman had previously been with Hoare Goyett and PrudentialBache.

So all these players have come to Singer from big securities houses. Yet Singer, whose shares are valued at less than £100 million, has put no money up front and insists it is not paying over-the-odds. Mr Fraher said: "I was on the board of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management. You have got to wonder why people would walk away from a situation like that and go to a small firm like Singer. The answer is that they have given us autonomy and a slice of the equity in our operation."

That makes it sound almost too simple. Mr Fraher claims the difference is that other employers saw the value of such an arrangement but won-

dered if it would work. Tony Solomons and John Hodson, respectively Singer's chairman and chief executive, did not ask too many questions and made a quick decision. "At our size," Mr Hodson admitted, "we will never be able to recruit the real stars into our normal structure. But the last thing these people want is to find themselves on another greasy pole. So they are willing to come at below-market salary rates in return for a share of the action and the chance to create their own business. And that suited us."

After four such deals, a pattern is emerging. Singer is gathering a mini-galaxy of these satellite operations, circling around and complementing its core operations of banking, corporate finance, fund management and property investment.

Mr Hodson said: "There is no requirement for the bank's capital to be used in respect of these ventures as they



Hodson reached a quick decision

are essentially fee-earning. In this way we are expanding our portfolio of banking products on a high-quality basis without any initial goodwill payment."

Other merchant banks have not so far followed suit. Hambros said it tended to promote from within rather than recruiting senior people from outside. Hill Samuel, part of TSB Group, said that as it was focusing on traditional merchant banking activities, it was not entering any new areas and was not actively recruiting.

A BZW spokeswoman said: "We do recruit from outside as the need is perceived, but I don't think we would give equity to recruits, as we are part of the Barclays group. The practice is to remunerate according to performance."

The obvious danger in the Singer strategy is that it may cause resentment to develop among existing executives who do not qualify for equity-related packages. Mr Hodson has clearly given this some thought. "If these specialists are successful everyone benefits," he argued, "and in any case they are not competing with the core operations. There is certainly a two-tier set-up, but what we want to avoid is a first-class/second-class type of division."

That Mr Hodson hopes, will be side-stepped by applying judicious doses of explanation and persuasion to any doubters. This may be somewhat easier to do in the present icy climate. When the thaw really does set in around the merchant banks, the stars will presumably start docking up more than useful profits. That will be the real test of the pure wage-earners' loyalty.

What the stock market really needs now is for Lord Hanson to embark on that career-crowning megalomaniac has been teasing us with for so long. That will set pulses racing — and fees flowing.

TEMPUS

Only a superficial cut

EVERYONE knew the Bundesbank's back was against the wall. What few people guessed was that it would notice the fact.

If the outcome of yesterday's Bundesbank meeting had been any different, Europe's financial markets would have been treated to an unsurpassed display of pyrotechnics which could well have destroyed the exchange-rate mechanism. Currency speculators would have forced the Danish krone into a devaluation and then rounded ferociously on the French franc.

The quarter-point cut in the discount rate stopped those battle waggons in their tracks. The market's surprise is best measured by the three pence rise in sterling, even though the pound is hardly a direct beneficiary. The bounce was mainly caused as dealers raced to cover short positions and crystallise profits. The dramatic turnaround of the FT-SE 100 index into an eight-point fall by the close

was also induced by shock, but it was also a well-overdue correction in what is becoming a gravity defying bull market.

The underlying question is whether the Bundesbank will come to the rescue of the krone, or any other beleaguered ERM currency, next time. There was little logic behind its action yesterday, since Denmark is no more a core component of the EC's economy than Ireland. More than 43 per cent of Denmark's exports go to countries which have devalued or quit the ERM, compared with 46.6 per cent of Ireland's.

The fundamental pressures faced by the ERM have not changed. Indeed, the quarter point has been conceded by the Bundesbank so grudgingly that speculators may decide that it will be the last cut for some time and be encouraged to redouble their efforts. The Bundesbank has bought nothing more than a brief breathing space.

Kingfisher

MANY people had given up hope that Kingfisher would make a major acquisition, believing that its future expansion would be based on joint ventures. Yesterday's announcement that it was in discussions with Darty, the French electrical retailer, suggests Kingfisher may be on the verge of an interesting, large and long-awaited deal.

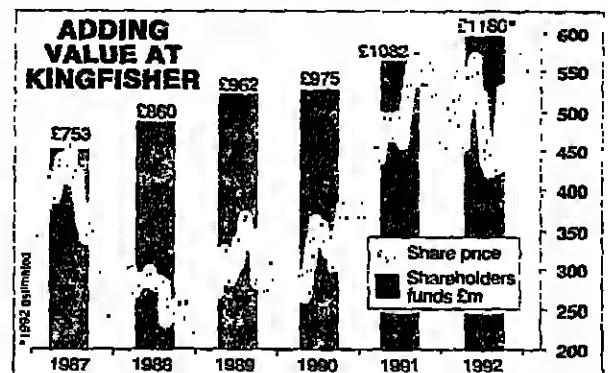
There is limited scope for expansion in electrical retailing in Britain as Kingfisher has to look abroad for growth. Darty is the leading player in the £10 billion French electrical retail market, with a 13 per cent share. Kingfisher hopes the company will be a springboard for further expansion into the rest of Europe — an ambition shared by Darty.

The missing part of the equation is price. Darty is

capitalised at £1 billion, and has debt of £550 million. Kingfisher should have no problem financing a deal of this size. Its gearing is only 7 per cent, and it could tap the market for further funds.

But Geoff Mulcahy's timing is questionable. The two companies have been in contact for four years, yet it has chosen a moment when sterling is at its lowest point

against the franc to make its move. Once the deal is sewn up, the franc could be devalued, which would reduce the value of Darty's operating profits. One hopes that Kingfisher's treasury department can be as adept at hedging currency risk as it is at managing the existing balance sheet.



Lasmo

THE City was well aware that Lasmo was assembling a package of disposals. The contents of that package show how desperate the group is to reduce its insupportable debts.

As expected, Lasmo has sold many of its peripheral North Sea assets, including its interests in the Bruce, Keith, Balmoral and Maureen fields. The package, however, also includes a 25 per cent interest in the Tree fields, which was previously regarded as one of the jewels in Lasmo's crown with tremendous potential.

One reason for the disposal of the Tree interests was undoubtedly price. It helped to raise the proceeds of the sale to £127 million, which will reduce Lasmo's gearing by 14 per cent to about 66 per cent, or net debt of £750 million. The other reason was the cost of developing the Tree fields — £100 million in the next three years.

Lasmo has some other peripheral holdings, but

these are unlikely to raise more than another £150 million. To reduce debts further it has little choice but to reduce the final dividend — a cut of almost two-thirds to 2.3p will save £36 million. Joe Darty, new chief executive, faces a long grind to restore the balance sheet and needs all the cash he can muster.

Fisons

FISONS did not need to announce its alliance with Allergan to the Stock Exchange, but it is a sign of the struggling pharmaceutical group's desperation and sickly share price that it should get news from every available rooftop.

Linking with Allergan in the US ophthalmic prescription market is sensible as it bolsters Fisons' marketing and distribution capacity. The alliance will boost the size of its sales force to 500 and boost penetration at pharmacies where it is under-represented. The only flaw is that Fisons does not have a product to put into this distri-

bution system after Opticrom was withdrawn by the FDA. Fisons' fortunes would be better served by getting Opticrom back on the shelves or selling horticulture and consumer health, which it has earmarked for disposal. Achieving either of these objectives would have a far greater impact on profits than ten of yesterday's deals.

Motor World

THE £28 million flotation of Motor World is another sign that the management buy-outs of the late eighties are coming home to roost. Motor World had little choice about floating: the venture capital firms that held its £7.5 million preference share investment wanted to realise their investment five years on.

Fortunately, it has managed to sell its shares on a reasonable price ratio of 13. Not all management buyouts will float so easily though, and the venture capital funds may decide to drag them on to the market to please their clients.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

From the horse's mouth

MIRROR Group Newspaper executives were yesterday scouring the neighbouring offices of *Sporting Life* for the official form guide to Montgomery, a runner in the 2.50 at Towcester. David Montgomery, MGN's new chief executive, was said to be less than happy with *The Daily Mirror's* guide to the horse's form. The tabloid said yesterday: "Not one to trust and looks out of his depth here." But it seems there was no conspiracy on the *Mirror* racing desk. *Timeform*, the racing punter's bible, describes the horse as a poor chaser and a sketchy jumper, which is "often blinkered". True to form, the 12-year-old nag lost to Bit of a Clown yesterday. *Mirror* hacks drinking in a Holborn Circus pub, known affectionately as The Stab (in the back), shared a few further jokes at their new boss's expense: according to *Timeform*, Montgomery (the horse) is by Push On out of — wait for it — *Mirror* Back.

Hawkins jailed

ALLAN Hawkins, founder of Equitcorp, the collapsed investment group, and one of the fallen kings of the New Zealand share market boom, was yesterday jailed for six years. The businessman, whose empire once extended to control of Guinness Peat, the British merchant bank, was found guilty of seven fraud and conspiracy charges on transactions totalling NZ\$520 million (£183 million) after a trial lasting 111

days, one of the longest and most expensive in New Zealand's history. Four other Equitcorp executives were also convicted of corruption and jailed. High Court Judge David Tompkins said Hawkins, 51, was the prime mover in efforts to divert funds from Equitcorp to the executives. Equitcorp, founded in 1984, was New Zealand's fifth largest company when it closed its last big deal the day the world's stock markets crashed in October, 1987.

Clapp stays

MORE shenanigans as J.P. Morgan tries to expand its European equity side. JPM expected that Joanna Clapp, head of research at Hoare Goyett, would soon join its ranks as head of European research. Clapp, however, remains firmly at her desk in London, giving rise to rumours that JPM decided to retreat at the last minute. Tim Draper, of J.P. Morgan in Paris, says: "We made offers to several people and, at the end

of the day, they're not always accepted."

THE Institute of Directors cannot be accused of failing to tune its palladium walls with divine inspiration. Those attending a February 26 conference on competitive marketing for accountants and solicitors should reap rewards from any spiritual vibes left floating throughout the building by the speaker the previous evening, the Rt Rev Richard Harries, who, as Bishop of Oxford, will give the institute's annual Pall Mall lecture: "Is there a gospel for the rich?"

Impeded speech

DENG Xiaoping, the ageing Chinese leader, has ordered the presenters of an evening economic news programme on Chinese state television to slow their delivery. The patriarch, 88, who is hard of hearing, watches the half-hour programme on China Central Television (CCTV) nearly every day. But Deng, who adopted new economic development priorities for the country in early 1992, when he called on his compatriots to embrace markets, reportedly told the station: "The announcers' reading is too fast. If they could slow down a bit, the programme would be even more watchable." A member of CCTV's Economic News Digest staff says: "We are willing to accept all reasonable suggestions made by viewers." Deng's hearing has deteriorated to the point where one of his daughters, Deng Rong, must remain at his side to interpret during conversations.

MELINDA WITTSTOCK

Noise pollution tax on flights

From Mr Leo Cavendish
Sir, I have news for Sir Robert McCrindle. Adding 75,000 extra landing slots at Heathrow would not just arouse understandable opposition from "environmentalists" in the area, it would arouse justifiable wrath of thousands of people who live under the flight path and whose lives are already blighted by aircraft noise. These people are better called residents, taxpayers and voters.

It is pretty daft in the first place to site one of the world's busiest airports so that the flight path goes over one of the most densely populated parts of the country. It is immoral bordering on criminal callousness to then continually increase the number of flights,

whether in the interests of competition or corporate profitability. As it is, a separation of 3 miles provides only ten seconds of pure silence between planes. And quieter jets are out quiet enough, especially at night.

A better solution would be to impose a noise pollution compensation tax on flights into Heathrow. Let us say £1 per head under the flight path per flight. That would soon encourage travellers to consider the merits of Gatwick and Stansted. And it could also provide a measure of compensation for the long-suffering residents of south west London and beyond.

Yours faithfully,
LEO CAVENDISH,
59 Palewell Park, SW14.

Barclays cache

From Mrs J. N. P. Watson
Sir, Mr Hamilton (Business Letters, February 2) notes that difficulties may arise where a charity receives cheques bearing an appeal name which differs from its own. He suggests that the act should therefore be repealed.

While I can appreciate Mr London's concern, repeal is not the right answer. The difficulties he mentions can be remedied in other, less drastic ways.

The simplest solution is to ensure that the name on an account which is to receive charitable donations (or indeed any other kind of cheque payment) is the same as the payee name which a donor is asked to put on his cheque. Care must be taken, therefore,

Taking care with charity cheques

in deciding on an appeal name — perhaps more so than in the past — in order to minimise the risk of "mis-matches" occurring, and donors must be told clearly what payee name should be used. In pre-printing cheques "account payee", all that bankers are doing is to give their customers the protection against fraud or theft that the act now offers. In turn, it must be recognised that an "account payee" cheque does not have the attributes of transferability, and should not be treated as if it did.

Yours faithfully,
INCHYRA
(Director-General),
British Bankers' Association,
10 Lombard Street, EC3.

Consumer bears price burden of uncompetitive banana industry

From Mr Paul Weiser
Sir, So "Tempus" thinks (*The Times* February 3) that artificially-high banana prices for the UK consumer in order to "provide a welcome boost to the profits of firms such as Fyffes", is a good thing.

Never mind that the UK consumer has over this period paid at least 50 per cent more for bananas, and for inferior fruit, than, say the German consumer (and 100 per cent more than the US), and that Fyffes, an Irish-owned company, together with Geest and Jamaica Producers Ltd, enjoy a virtual monopoly of the UK banana business, to the detriment of the vast majority of the fruit and vegetable importers in the UK, including many quoted companies who are precluded from importing bananas due to the "catch 22" system of licences.

This association was set up to fight this and to represent

the interests of the dispossessed majority of UK fruit importers, and now also European importers, since HMG are one of the prime movers behind the community proposals, which go against free trade, and Galt.

We do not blame Fyffes, Geest and Jamaica Producers for fighting to maintain and perpetuate the current situation, and indeed congratulate them on their magnificent PR campaign, but we submit that 40 years' protection is enough. It is time for competition, a free market and free choice, as there is in every other product and industry.

By the way, what "banana wars", and "damage done by cheap Latin-American imports"? The UK is a protected market and there were no cheap bananas here! Also, if the Latin Americans are so evil, why have Geest invested heavily in Costa Rica, so that

according to their own figures, nearly 40 per cent of their banana imports this year will be from Latin America?

To our members, this government pays lip service to free trade and level-field competition, and least to consumer interests.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL WEISER,
Executive Committee Member,
AABIEC (Association for Access to Banana Imports into the European Community),
62/65 Link House,
New Covent Garden Market,
SW6.

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THEATRE page 26

Geraldine Alexander stars in a misguided revival in Leeds of a Eugene O'Neill play

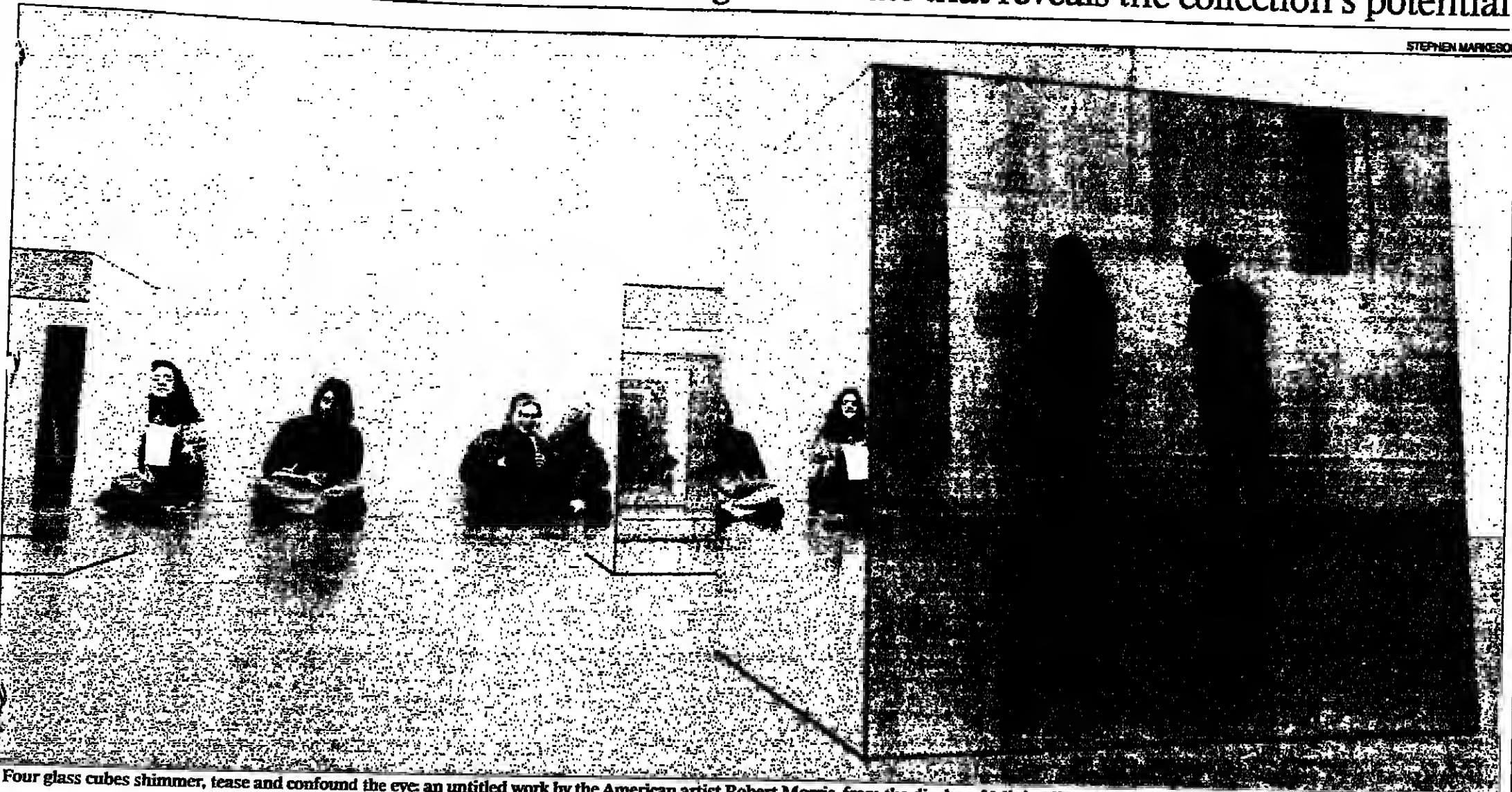
ARTS

CINEMA page 27

Cyril Collard in his own Les Nuits fauves, a flashy offering at the Rotterdam Film Festival



GALLERIES: Richard Cork on a re-hang at the Tate that reveals the collection's potential



Four glass cubes shimmer, tease and confound the eye: an untitled work by the American artist Robert Morris, from the display of Minimalism that forms part of the new re-hang at the Tate Gallery

Flexing his well-polished bicep near the entrance to the Duveen sculpture hall, Rodin's Age of Bronze heralds the advent of the latest Tate re-hang. This arresting display of curatorial muscle has become an annual fixture under Nicholas Serota's directorship, and the transformation is evident at once. Instead of Richard Serra's dour, inert blocks punctuating the Duveen's echoing emptiness, Rodin has now been allowed to galvanize the gallery with restless vigour. Aided by loans from the Victoria and Albert Museum, his dynamism acts as a tonic.

Rodin's bronzes also offer a welcome antidote to the carved slackness of his marble Kiss, a ponderous old favourite exhumed from the storerooms. But even the Kiss looks less predictable when juxtaposed with another, far more troubled embrace in the Octagon beyond: Epstein's Jacob and the Angel. Supposedly wrestling, the limp Jacob is in fact submitting to the angel's sexually charged grip. And the intimacy of their struggle seems to have affected the four women in Rodin's surrounding sculpture of Bathing Women, who all turn away from the male-bonding wrestlers as if in embarrassment.

By borrowing the Rodins, Serota shows how a collection's batteries can be re-charged with the help of other museums. But a great deal more could be done in the future. At the moment, the Tate only begins to acknowledge sculpture's existence in the late 19th century. The V&A owns the national collection of earlier British sculpture, and it always looks marooned and melancholy down in South Kensington. Better by far to integrate it with the pictures at the Tate.

The possibilities for extending the Tate's scope are immense, and they take on an extra pertinence now that the decision to split the

New moves towards a bigger, clearer picture

collections has at last been announced. Once the present building is given over wholly to British art, a far more expansive presentation of its history becomes possible. And tantalising hints of this are given in the new re-hang.

Take Mary Beale, a hitherto neglected portraitist from the Restoration period. Although she spent most of her career producing copies of Lely's portraits, her fresh and spirited *Portrait of a Young Girl* shows what she might have achieved in a less male-dominated culture. More women painters are doubtless waiting to be discovered, and the Tate could also do more to honour foreign artists who worked in Britain. Why should Holbein and Van Dyck be confined to the National Gallery, when they produced their finest work in this country?

The question needs to be asked now that Canaletto, at long last, is displayed at Millbank. His panorama of the Old Horse Guards from St James's Park, lent by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Art Foundation, makes absolute sense in the context of 18th-century British cityscape painting. The meticulous sobriety with which Canaletto depicts the buildings is countered by the uninhibited liveliness of his figures and animals. A man with a colossal paunch pauses to gossip, while two dogs scrap and servants beat a gold carpet on the railings outside Downing Street. In the shadows

near by, another figure, casually urinating against a wall — a detail which Hogarth would have relished.

Canaletto's presence immeasurably enhances our understanding of British art during the years when he painted here. No foreign artist who worked in Britain and influenced home-grown painters should henceforth be excluded. After all, the Tate has for many years shown key works by the American-born Sargent and Whistler. Both men play prominent roles in a new display devoted to late Victorian and Edwardian portraits.

Sargent's flashiness, staking all on quick-silver handling and maximised glamour, is far removed from Whistler's exquisite *Miss Cleely Alexander*. Part of her blanching, doleful appeal may come from Whistler's insistence on demanding more than 70 sittings. His obsessive need for control extended to designing the girl's muslin dress, hat and sash himself, but the outcome is paradoxically modest.

Scottish visitors might well complain that their native painters are meagrely represented at the Tate. English art predominates wherever you look, and the occasional inclu-

sion of a Glaswegian such as Edward Atkinson Hornel serves only to reveal how many of his compatriots are missing. Now that Scotland has decided to create a gallery devoted to its own art, the Tate really must work out how Scottish practitioners might best be represented at Millbank.

In the proposed new gallery of modern art, British and foreign works should be intermingled. So I was intrigued to find a new emphasis in the re-hang on placing British pictures in an international context.

The policy carries risks, of course. Placing Vanessa Bell or Duncan Grant in the same room as Derain and Matisse makes the Bloomsbury painters look tame. But William Ratcliffe's unfamiliar attempt to paint Hampstead Garden Suburb in a Fauvist range of red, purple and orange provides a crisp, refreshing surprise. As for Mark Gertler's *Merry-Go-Round*, this rasping carousel of leering, robot-like riders has a nightmarish attack which holds up well in a room otherwise dominated by Beckmann's icy *Carnival* and Picasso's frenzied *The Three Dancers*, half bacchanic riot and half crucifixion.

Picasso himself is unevenly represented in the Tate's collection. His seminal contribution to Cubism dates out after 1909, leaving Braque alone to show how their discoveries deepened over the next half-dozen years. Now, however, Picasso's Cubist period is displayed with greater richness. Several canvases from the Berggruen collection, normally on long-term loan to the National Gallery, have been sent over here. The two finest, a savagely hatched, acid-yellow study for *Les Femmes d'Alger* and the strangely scroll-like *Still Life on a Piano*, transform our understanding of a high point in Picasso's long career.

By revealing more and more aspects of the Tate holdings with each successive re-hang, Serota's rotational programme proves just how urgent a priority the split should be. For each freshly hung room can only be achieved by

banishing other, equally deserving works to the storeroom. Their disappearance is becoming increasingly painful, and mars the pleasure generated by the emergence of other hidden images.

At the moment, a limp section is given over to the post-war achievements of Barbara Hepworth, rightly concentrating on carvings rather than bronzes. The entire Hepworth room will only be visible until the summer. Artists of Hepworth's stature should always be on view, and I urge the Tate's trustees to ensure that the present desperate space shortage is alleviated as soon as possible.

The two latest acquisitions on view, Christian Boltanski's death-haunted *The Reserve of the Swiss Dead* and Ian Hamilton Finlay's equally funereal *A Wartime Garden*, each takes up an immense amount of space. Even the sculpture in the Minimalist room, where Robert Morris's four beguiling glass cubes shimmer, tease and confound the eye, looks reasonable in size compared with the behemoths made by so many of today's artists. Contemporary installations often require far more space than work from the past, and until the new gallery is erected, we stand no chance at all of doing full justice to the art of our own time.

Abolishing the ambiguity of the Abstract Expressionists, they concentrated on forms as basic as cubes or rectangular slabs. The impersonal surfaces evoked an industrial world, and many of the sculptors began to have their work fabricated by industrial craftsmen. The emphasis started to shift to the idea behind the work. In Andre's "Equivalents" series, each of the variously shaped sculptures consisted of 120 bricks stacked in different combinations. Lying flat on the floor, they all flouted sculpture's traditional tendency to assert itself as a vertical mass.

Today, the once-exercised *Equivalent VIII* looks modest, unassuming, even discreet. But memories of the outrage created by "the bricks" remain vivid, and may prompt us to view them, against all the odds, with a certain nostalgic affection.

Richard Cork

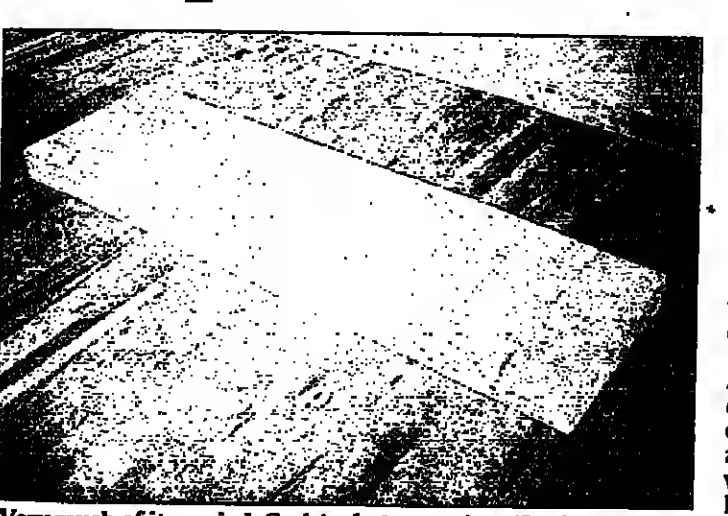
Possibilities for extending the Tate's scope are immense

Minimal impact, maximum fuss

Among the many victims of the Tate's space crisis is Carl Andre's *Equivalent VIII*, better known to the British public simply as "the bricks". Since it became the collection's most notorious acquisition in 1976, this two-layered, low-level rectangle of firebricks has only been displayed intermittently. But now Andre's once-villified sculpture has returned, in a new display of American Minimalism. And its exhumation is bound to trigger memories of the nationwide apostrophe caused by "the bricks" 17 years ago.

No other modern work has generated so many enraged column inches in Britain, or provoked so much verbal vituperation. After the *Daily Mirror* devoted its front page to a headline denunciation ("WHAT A LOAD OF RUBBISH"), *Equivalent VIII* became the automatic butt of everyone who thought that modern art was a con-trick.

Contempt centred on the lowliness of the materials, and the fact that Andre had simply stacked them rather than changing them in any way. Further suspicion was fanned by the knowledge that the firebricks in the Tate's sculpture were not even the originals. Andre first exhibited *Equivalent VIII*, along with the seven other brick sculptures in the series, at New



Very much of its period: Carl Andre's notorious *Equivalent VIII*

York's Tibor de Nagy Gallery in 1966. Nothing was sold at the show, so he returned most of the bricks to the yard in order to get his money back.

Three years later, when burgeoning fame stimulated international demand for his work, he decided to reconstruct the eight sculptures. But the brickyard no longer existed, so Andre settled for yellow-brown substitutes rather than the "bluish-white" originals. He was satisfied that they still remained faithful to the work he had made in 1966, but public opinion regarded the change of bricks as one more

damning demonstration of Andre's supposed chicanery.

Now that they have reappeared, in a room filled with other, equally pared-down examples of minimal work by Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Don Judd and Larry Bell, "the bricks", pale in colour and neatly ordered, seem an unlikely candidate for infamy. But perhaps Andre's very refusal to pretend that *Equivalent VIII* was anything other than 120 ordinary firebricks inflamed the hostility still further.

The sculpture now looks strikingly of its period. Andre and his contemporaries were reacting

TELEVISION

Manners make a manager

The Brittas Empire BBC 1

If you accept that the British character is most accurately captured in sitcoms — remember Harold Steptoe, Frank Spencer and Basil Fawlty — you will agree that Britain has a new hero. He works in a leisure centre, wears a double-breasted blazer and a shiny tie, and represents a curious amalgam of ancient and modern. His decency has a pre-war sparkle, but he is simultaneously a master-bureaucrat in the 1990s mould.

The Brittas Empire, as the title implies, is a sideways glance at the state of the nation, and Gordon Brittas is its voice of remarkable ordinariness. In last night's episode he rejected a large monetary gift from a rich American as somehow too tasteless. He may be a stickler for form-filling, but his values are unimpeachable.

The same cannot be said for his manner, which is similar to that of Sybil Fawlty, an earlier study in condescension. His Sybil-like, sycophantic "Yes", elongated beyond endurance, is the least irritating of a large collection of personal traits. Chris Barrie plays Brittas with a malevolent skill, and is especially adept at a flat Essex whine, delivered with maximum nasality. In quick succession, he makes Brittas glib, smarmy and — perhaps his greatest trick — occasionally likable.

But The Brittas Empire is not merely a vaudevilian tour de force for Barrie. Its setting in a new town's leisure centre exploits the primary-coloured optimism of this wholesome new England. In this, of course, it is out of touch with reality even by sitcom standards, but The Brittas Empire makes a virtue of implausibility. Colin Handysman, for instance, was lined up to do some sponsored juggling. "Mr Brittas, you've got to help", he exclaims. "My balls are on fire!" Deservedly, given this awful line, Colin was the victim of this week's stunt, electrocution from a great height.

For all its jollity, the suspicion grows that The Brittas Empire is actually a covert satire on Britishness. Last night, Brittas's neurotic secretary foolishly came to work with a novel she had just finished writing. "Let's leave the novel-writing to the novelists, eh?" is Brittas's advice, "and concentrate on keeping a nice, tidy reception area." He is a thoroughly modern manager, after all.

ANDY LAVENDER

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A CELEBRATION OF THE ERA OF SWING

Accent on the quaint and quirky

Geoff Brown picks out some of the best of the distinctly idiosyncratic offerings at this year's Rotterdam Film Festival

Outside Cairo, Rotterdam's film festival must be the only one where you could possibly see a frozen chicken which he met while living in a freezer. This occurs in *Love in the Fridge*, proudly featured in a selection of comedies from Egypt and Iran, chosen in part with the humanitarian aim of moderating the West's stereotypical images of Islamic culture.

Rotterdam's festival, now in its 22nd year, has always steered clear of mainstream fodder, and its current director, dashing documentary filmmaker Emile Fallaux, is doing everything to continue the tradition. One section, "The Limits of Liberty", is of features and film-makers who suffer censorship of various kinds. Metod Pevec's Yugoslav war story *The Desert* has surfaced, thus breaking the UN boycott of Serbia. Wu Zinou's *The Big Mill*, withdrawn by the Chinese from the Berlin Film Festival two years ago, also appeared, dazzling audiences with its powerful images of love and cruelty in the Red Army's guerrilla war of the 1930s.

The films unfold, from nine in the morning to the wee hours the following day, in a city centre that gives eloquent witness to the horrors perpetrated by wartime bombers and modern architects. Normally the cinemas house *Home Alone 2* and the rest of the Hollywood fare that circles and imprisons the globe. But for ten days each year they are set free. Not that American cinema is a dirty word here, Rotterdam cherishes independent spirit such as Jim Jarmusch, Jon Jost and Hal Hartley. This year Abel Ferrara, maker of ferociously stylised, violent dramas, is receiving the retrospective treatment. Faced with the raging Angst and indulgence of some debuting film-makers, it was almost a relief to fall upon *Ms.45* of 1981, where Ferrara directs with an aim as sure as that of the dumb, mousy heroine, who bounces back from a rape and mugging by slaying every predatory male in sight.

Among the new American contingent, Mark D'Auria's feature debut *Smoke* created quite a stir for its awkward but brave portrait of a young gay in New York with a frustrated penchant for older,

heavier men. Following the grand tradition of first-person cinema, D'Auria plays the tortured hero himself. D'Auria's admiration for the films of Sergei Parajanov leads him to douse the soundtrack with Russian liturgical chants, producing a grandiose air the images rarely deserve. He copes better in intimate scenes, where the characters' sexual preferences are presented without ever seeming distasteful.

Then there is David Lynch, tucked away in a section entitled "Cinema Made By Television". Two episodes have been screened from a new television series. On *The Air* — so aggressively silly that it sits up and begs to be axed by network executives. The time is 1957; the place, the Zoltotnick Broadcasting Corporation, where a live variety series, "The Lester Guy Show", causes endless turmoil. Its émigré director, Vladja Gochitch, shouts

'Riotous transformations wrought on the oom-pah-pah'

down the wrong end of his megaphone. Blinkie, the guy on the sound effects panel, suffers from multiple vision; while the show's female lead has an IQ that makes Grace Allen look like Einstein. No matter how bizarre the doings in *Twin Peaks*, Lynch's actors kept straight faces; here, they furiously play for laughs that only the most indulgent viewer will provide.

Brass Unbound, however, met with general rejoicing: how can you resist any film that ends with four brass bands from Ghana and the Far East ripping through "It's a Long Way to Tipperary"? This is the work of Johan van der Keuken, a poetic, quizzical master of Dutch documentary, fascinated by the cultural divide between north and south, east and west. Using scientific research by anthropologist Rob Boonzaier, van der Keuken took his cameras to Nepal, Surinam, the Minahassa peninsula and Ghana, observing the riotous transformations that native culture wrought on the old oom-pah-pah of the colonial brass band.

Here are tartan bagpipes and home-made tubas of gargantuan size, blasting away at weddings, funerals and street gatherings with an explosive "world music" that keeps the foot tapping. A few cuts during the interviews and the camera's perambulations might help cohesion, but I cannot think of any other recent film that made me want to rush out and buy the



Met with general rejoicing: Dutch documentary master Johan van der Keuken's *Brass Unbound*

soundtrack CD. Alas, there isn't one.

Back in the west, France has brought forth *Les Nuits fauves*, a flashy first feature from Cyril Collard, author, lyric writer and past assistant to Maurice Pialat. Like D'Auria, Collard assumes centre stage as a bisexual cameraman in 1986 who pursues joint affairs with a teenage girl (Romane Bohringer) and a hulking footballer, despite being diagnosed HIV-positive. With his open-necked shirts and self-regarding pose, Collard might have stepped from a cigarette advert; so might his directorial style. The glossy images race by, leaving the hero's reckless behaviour virtually unchallenged. The film makes a noise, certainly, but it is not a noise to be encouraged.

One French film in Rotterdam actually is a cigarette advert, its directors are Jean-Luc Godard, no less, and his customary helpmate, Anne Marie Miéville. To a loud soundtrack, stockinged feet push through cigarette packets on the floor; a book, *Parisienne People*, is being read; someone lights up. The disjointed images are all over in 35 seconds, leaving no impression other than bewilderment. Another New Wave veteran, Luc Moullet, appeared with the endearingly weird *Parapluie*, partly inspired by "The Passion Considered as an Uphill Bicycle Race", a famous jape by Ubu's creator Alfred Jarry. Tati-esque visual gags nonchalantly unfold as the cast of cyclists struggle up winding slopes in the French Alps. Some cheat; some conduct business with mobile

phones; one wears a tutu. It is hard to see Moullet's *divertissement* finding commercial success, but there is much for connoisseurs to enjoy in its quiet absurdist comedy. For obvious reasons, absurdist and jet-black comedy dominate many films from the old Soviet Union. Nikolai Dostal had a winner last year in *Cloud Heaven*, but his follow-up, awkwardly entitled *A Small Giant of Big Sex*, loses its way in broad buffoonery about a seaside Casanova's exploits in the Kammeroper era. Alenki Balabanov's *Happy Days*, a debut feature, showed plenty of promise with its stark account of a homeless amnesiac in pre-revolutionary St Petersburg. The festival continues with the rare, the unusual, the brazen and courageous until Sunday; happy days indeed.

OPERA: THE VIENNA KAMMEROPER

Cross-border traffic heavier than ever

The Vienna Kammeroper has just celebrated its fortieth birthday with the work with which it began life, *Il Signor Bruchino*. This is early Rossini, coming just before *L'italiano in Algeri*, and has the overture which requires the strings to tap their bows in unison against the music stands. It is ideal for a chamber opera company: one lengthy act and a single set, two heavy buffo roles, rewarding arias for tenor and soprano as the young lovers, and no chorus.

Back in 1953 the Kammeroper was giving the Vienna premiere, sung in German with a cast of young Austrian singers. The company had been born out of the Vienna Opera Studio, which employed artists such as Eberhard Wachter, Walter Berry and Waldemar Kmentz at the start of their careers. Forty years on the Kammeroper has a rather different look. *Bruchino*, sung in Italian, was staged by a Russian (Nadim Milkov) in zippy commedia dell'arte style complete with masks, reasonably enough, as Rossini's *farsa* had its first performance in Venice. It was conducted with élan by a Czech, Petr Vronsky.

The most promising voice on stage belonged to another Russian, Marina Schukova, who if she can suppress a slight hardness in her soprano should be well on the way to a substantial international career — Lucia an obvious future role. The new Czech Republic provided the baritone (Vojtech Nalezenec) for *Bruchino* himself, a faintly Falstaffian figure who gets duped in the interests of true love before dispensing forgiveness all round. The buffo bass (Aleksandr Teliga) came from the Ukraine. Only for the tenor role of Florville did the Kammeroper look to the West and come up with Fermin Montagud, an agile Spanish tenor in the Gimenez mould.

Hans Gabor, who has run the Kammeroper from the outset, which must put him well in contention for the title of Europe's longest-serving Intendant, reckons that the East is going to dominate the search for young singers in the years ahead. "The talent is there and so is the enthusiasm — when I was in Moscow before Christmas I auditioned over 200 singers. What is lacking is the polish: we have to provide that."

This artistic push from east to west has certainly been fuelled by the annual Belvedere singing competition held in Vienna each summer and operated by the Kammeroper. Applications by the thousand are whittled down to about 300 by the July final rounds. Well before the political barriers broke down in eastern Europe singers, led by the Romanians and Poles, saw an award at the Belvedere as a route to fame and fortune. The major prize-winner of two

years ago, the Romanian soprano Angela Gheorghiu, sings Lili in this month's Covent Garden revival of *Turandot*.

This pressure from the East is undoubtedly making the Kammeroper much more international. Its theatre, a 300-seater, used to be an experimental house, where on a good night Klaus Kinski might have been heard reading Rimbaud before the Kammeroper acquired it in 1963. It is situated at the furthest remove within Vienna's Ring from the State Opera, deliberately, some would say, because of the Kammeroper's fiercely guarded independence. It began by putting on small-scale performances of unfamiliar works: Rossini, Donizetti, Offenbach, the first Viennese performances of Mozart's *La finta semplice* and *Il re pastore*. There was an inward looking period when Viennese parodies of grand



Unconventional: a scene from George Tabori's first production, *I Pagliacci*

opera were unearthed and staged by the great comedian Fritz Mullar — *Othello*, *The Moor of Vienna*, *The Barber of Seville*... "We did," says Gabor, "what the State Opera and the Volksoper did not."

And if there was an overlap then the Kammeroper went to some lengths to ensure that their product would be very different. A rock *Bohème* in the mid-Eighties was not all that successful but a rock *Carmen* immediately after devised by Stewart Trotter, one-time director of Exeter's Northcott Theatre, sold out every performance. Trotter is scheduled to have *The Tales of Hoffmann* rocking next season. The veteran director George Tabori was persuaded to stage his first opera and obliged with a highly unconventional *Pagliacci*.

But now the eyes are turned east. The next opera in is Schnitzke's *Life with an Idiot* performed in Russian, a co-production with the Moscow Chamber Opera. The Kammeroper remains a staging-post for young singers — the average age of the *Bruchino* cast was 27 — but it now stands where Vienna has always stood: at the crossroads of Europe.

JOHN HIGGINS

DANCE: Nadine Meisner on a value-for-money mixed bill and what may be the dance equivalent of Grunge

Bravo Birmingham for assorted abundance

Birmingham Royal Ballet Sadler's Wells

BIRMINGHAM Royal Ballet's opening programme at Sadler's Wells may have seemed a rag-bag assortment of six items, but it certainly represented value for money. Recognising this, Londoners packed the auditorium. They gasped at Tetsuya Kumakawa in the *Don Quixote pas de deux*, soaring in space with bracing clarity; chuckled at the jokes in Ashton's *Façade*; and sat silently gripped by Kurt Jooss's searing expressionist drama, *The Green Table*.

It was not only Kumakawa, guesting from the Royal Ballet, who produced crackling sparks in *Don Quixote*, but his Japanese compatriot Miyako Yoshida, always so perfect in her outlines, with a refined musicality that allowed her to highlight the rhythms. Next to such panache, Kenneth MacMillan's 20-year-old *Pavane*, danced by Marion Tait and Kevin O'Hare, seemed to lack purpose, betraying its origin as a lyrical pas de deux custom-made for a gala.

There was nothing vivid about Hans van Manen's *Twilight*, the programme's remaining duet. A restless, nervy couple explore their relationship against an uneasy industrial landscape and orange sun congealed in the smog-filled, darkening sky. Joseph Cipolla possessed a satisfying brooding core of intensity, which Chene Williams did not, as though it had fizzled out through her long limbs. But in *Façade*, nicely underplayed by its cast, she revealed a subtle gift for comedy as the



Slight: Kevin O'Hare and Michela Centin in *Paramour* for Birmingham Royal Ballet

Debutante: the delayed astonishment on her face was a beautiful response to the paralyzing shock of being suddenly cartwheeled in the air.

The revival of Graham Lustig's *Paramour*, featuring silly society flirtations and fluttering chiffon, seemed small beer in a programme which ended with Jooss's 1932 anti-war masterpiece. To anyone new to *The Green Table* what comes across most forcibly is the way Jooss's movement merges graphic sparseness with a powerful,

highly specific eloquence. The white-gloved hands of the Gentlemen in Black are ever-mobile in their discussions around the green table, clapping to show agreement, pointing to put forward an argument; while the white-gloved hands of the Profiteer move quite differently, flapping smoothly and adroitly, communicating his slippery ability to exploit any given situation. The dancers gave riveting performances: to name individuals would not be fair.

Krakeel The Place

A MAN picks up a girl as though she were a sack of potatoes, slings her over one shoulder and with his free hand reaches for a drink. Still hanging shapelessly, she retaliates by grabbing it from him and slinging it to the floor. It could just as well have been vomit spewing out, considering the nature of the rest of the show: *Station Hotel* by

a young group called Krakeel. In The Place's "Spring Load" series.

This hotel is not the kind of establishment to get a Michelin rating. Chairs and tables strewn with dirty glasses inhabit the interior, as do six unprepossessing individuals whose manifest lack of purpose in life identifies them as not destined for the fast lane to success. Activity for them consists of hanging from trapezes for no discernible reason; sprawling lifelessly on the ground; sitting on and off the edge of a table in what could only be an appalling alcohol- or drug-induced stupor.

Occasionally they also crash violently about in a dance language so destitute that not even the desperate addition of hand-held torches could add interest. They engage in prolonged embraces in various sexual permutations which include one man dressed as a woman. They sing, they posture droopily, they want to be endearing.

Determined to adopt modish attitudes, Kristina Page and her company have opted for already over-used devices and ended up with clichés. In the interest of what theme, is anybody's guess. If there is any glimmer of meaning in the performers' faces it is hidden behind straggly hair that falls forward as they slouch. *Station Hotel*, the result of a Digital Dance Award, is a little gem of incoherence.

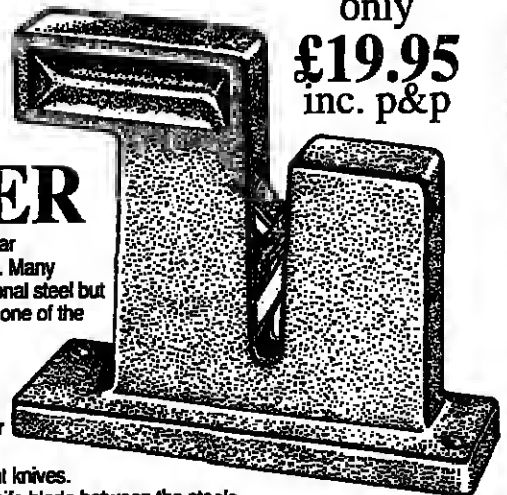
Suddenly it dawned on me. Page has combined the brutality of the Belgian choreographer Wim Vandekeybus and the restaurant setting of Pina Bausch's *Cofé Müller* (presented at the last Edinburgh Festival) to produce the dance equivalent of Grunge, god help us.

THE TIMES

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Fancy flying solo?

The attraction of higher pay and the peripatetic lifestyle of the freelance computer specialist have long been the envy of the staid but more secure full-time office worker.

"Earnings of £1,000 a week are by no means uncommon," John Samson, the editor of *Computer Contractor* magazine, told readers in a recent issue. The question of whether to "go contract" with the possibility of being able to double earnings is one that most computer staff ask themselves at some time or another. Although the middle of a recession may not be the ideal time to turn freelance, full-timers in information technology can no longer bank on the industry offering the secure career that it did in the 1970s and 1980s.

While some are born to be their own boss, others have increasingly had it thrust upon them, and the possibility of choice is diminishing. Freelance staff have also suffered during the recession. At first sight, however, it would appear that employment patterns in computing have changed in their favour as

With permanent jobs in computer technology at risk, more staff are going freelance, writes David Guest

companies reduce staff and rely more on contractors with specific skills for individual projects.

But with plenty of permanent staff having been shown the door, competition for contract work has increased dramatically. It means that those considering a voluntary move into freelancing face a dilemma. Should they jump or wait to be pushed?

"Looking at the next six months, it is not a good time to start," says Paul Butler, a contractor of two years standing but with 12 years experience in computing. "The number of vacancies is picking up, but only slowly."

Getting the first contract is likely to be the most difficult problem, he says. "When people employ contractors, they are normally looking for an early start date. If you are on a month or three month's notice from your permanent employer, you cannot do it."

Under present circumstances it would take a strong nerve to hand in your notice in the hope of finding a suitable contract several weeks or months hence. "And the rates contractors can charge have been very depressed in some areas," Mr Butler says.

Newcomers to contracting in information technology can suffer from the same Catch-22 situation prevalent in many disciplines. Employers often prefer those who can prove that the freelance life suits both them and their work.

In 1989, the high-water mark of contracting, there were seven magazines devoted to the interests of freelance computer staff. Now there are only two - *VNU's Computer Contractor* and *Reed's Freelance Informer*.

Tony Fauré, the publisher of *Computer Contractor*, sees some hope of better times ahead. "The market has been growing in the past 12 months

and more noticeably in the past six," he says.

Susan Cuff, a director of the personnel agency Computer People, acknowledges that the market is in recession, but adds: "The business hasn't died and if anything the market is more competitive than in previous recessions. A skills squeeze in open systems has become increasingly apparent. The signs are that the recession is starting to wane."

Other skills in demand include experience of relational databases, the sophisticated modern data storage and retrieval systems. However, competition between contractors is more intense than in previous years, especially for lower level work and, as a consequence, rates are depressed.

Contractors have had to be prepared to be flexible, says Ms Cuff, who notes that the average length of contracts is sharply down. "In the past two or three years the average contract was more than six months. Now it is about half that. This affects people's ability to forecast their revenues and profits and increases the administrative burden."

Mr Butler, presently work-



High-flyer running his own business: Paul Butler, a freelance computer consultant, at Rhosneig airport

ing as a consultant to an aircraft maintenance project for a subsidiary of British Airways based near Rhosneig Airport, Cardiff, says that he is more optimistic than at this time last year. "It was probably the worst since I have been in

the industry. I have never known as many people out of work. The number of those with prematurely terminated contracts was incredible. A lot of friends and colleagues have had 12 months out of work and I, too, was unemployed

for a period of six months." If the contractor has no advantage, it is that the very act of going freelance implies acceptance of a degree of insecurity, Ms Cuff says. "In a way the contractor may be in a better position than the per-

manent staff member because the security of a permanent job is questionable." One contractor described his salaried colleagues as wearing expressions suggestive of a "sack-by date" stamped on their foreheads.

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INFOTECH

'Allo, 'allo ring of confidence

In the future you will be able to let the phone do the talking in any language, says Matthew May

Tick the language you want to speak, says the advertisement for one mail-order course which promises that learning anything from Afrikaans to Thai can take as little as three months.

In a few years' time such language schools may face competition from a new service that will make it completely unnecessary to speak a foreign language when telephoning abroad. Placing a special dialling code in front of the telephone number of the country being called will ensure that the recipient hears the call in whatever tongue is chosen.

It may be very early days, but last week saw the first successful international trial of a telephone translating system that could be the basis of just such a service. "Moshi, moshi," said a Japanese researcher into his telephone in Kyoto. A few seconds later his greeting was received by a colleague at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh as a synthesised voice saying "Hello".

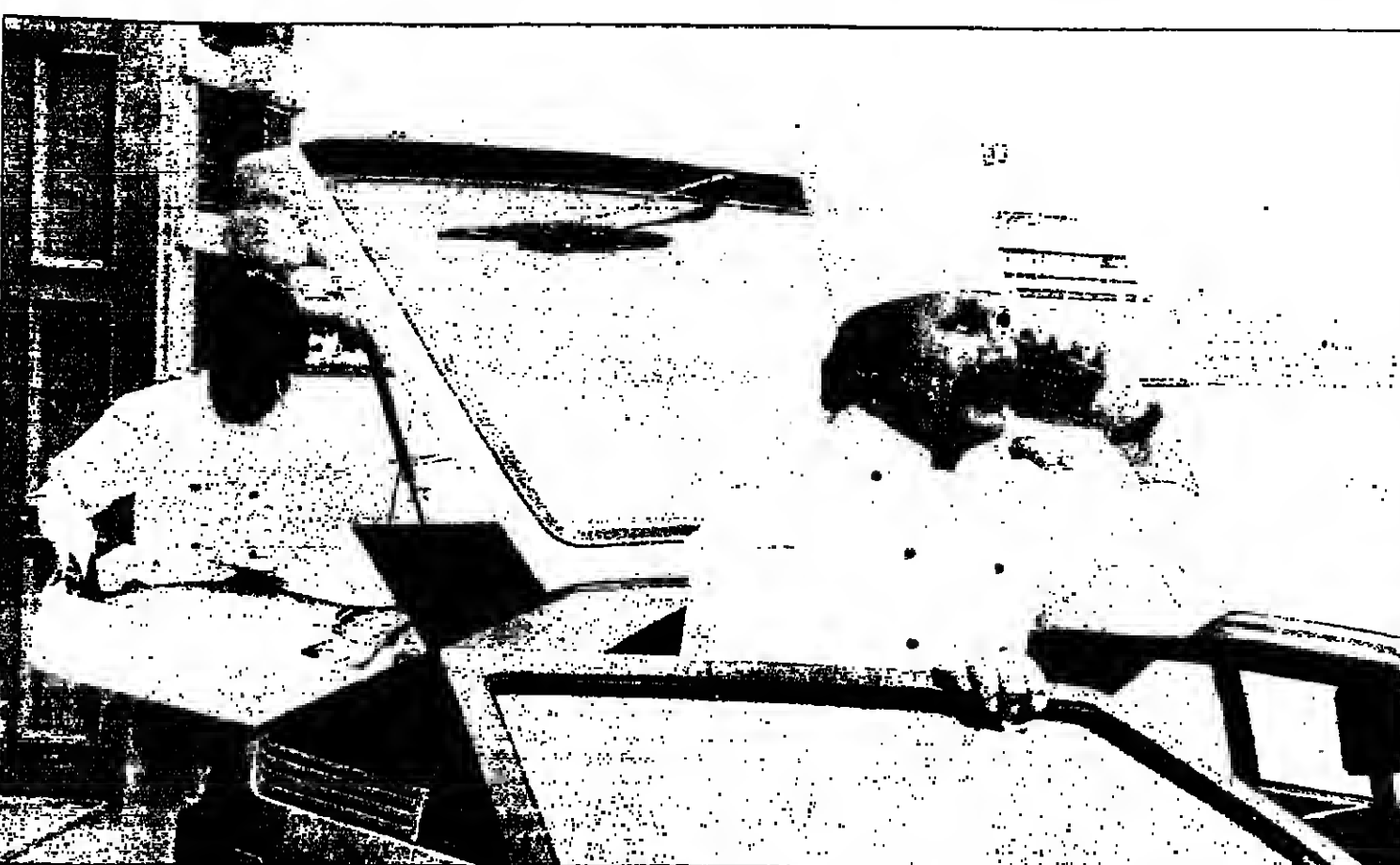
"Hello, this is the conference office," the American researcher replied. "May I help you?" A perfect Japanese translation was heard in Kyoto about 15 seconds later. Other researchers in Munich joined in to test the system's ability to translate from German to Japanese or English and vice versa.

While some may scoff at the very idea, the Japanese Advanced Telecommunications Research (ATR), the institute behind the trial, takes it very seriously indeed. To get this far has taken seven years and cost almost £90 million. Funds have come from the Japanese government and industry, including telecommunications and electronics companies. The strength of the Japanese commitment to perfect machines that can translate has been compared to the effort by America to reach the moon. So far the vocabulary of the system stands at about 1,500 words — small, but perhaps enough to be useful for specific business conversations.

"The system might initially be used by car rental agencies or hotels for reservations when multilingual staff are not available and the range of conversation is not too broad," says Shigeki Sagayama, the head of ATR's speech-processing department. Telephone translation is the most ambitious end of development work aimed at making translation by computers an everyday service. However, to gain wide acceptance, translating by telephone needs to be able to handle "live" conversations as they happen.

Instantaneous translation that is not restricted to specialist uses is still many years away — up to ten years, say some experts, although others are convinced that it could be in common use well before the end of the decade. Last week's demonstration, for example, was accomplished by converting each spoken sentence into text. It was then translated from into Japanese by a computer and sent over the telephone line as a digital message before being reconverted into speech at the other end using a voice synthesiser.

It is a process which takes about ten to 15 seconds for each sentence to get through — short enough to be usable, with a slight 15 minute conversation being conducted last week, but far too slow for a good gossip.



On the line: foreigners who speak no French will be able to place a word-perfect lunch order by phone in time for their arrival in France

The primitive systems already on sale that translate the written word take considerably longer to translate a tricky phrase or two. Their accuracy, of anything from 70 to 90 per cent, may be acceptable

nises their voices. Even then a heavy cold or one too many at lunchtime is likely to result in the computer failing until full health or sobriety is restored. Last week's demonstration, however, achieved speaker independence. The system does not need to be trained to recognise a particular person, but will work with any voice.

Because the processing power for telephone translation services can be based at a telephone exchange, expensive computers can be shared by those using the service. This is considerably easier than trying to cram the necessary computing power into an affordable pocket or desktop device.

The predicted surge in power from new types of computer chips is expected to be in demand precisely by those who are developing programs for complex analytical tasks such as voice recognition and language translation. Translations made by a machine, however, have one further problem. Mistakes instantly attract the derision of those convinced that computers will never be able to make more than

a botch job at translation. Stories abound, sometimes apocryphal, of computers that have struggled valiantly but been unable to cope. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," allegedly came out in Russian as "The vodka is good, but the meat is rotten."

Fujitsu executives have cause to regret at least one demonstration of their work in the field made to Margaret Thatcher, then prime minister, in 1989. "I think it is an honour to visit this company today," she told the machine which attempted to translate into Japanese and then back into English. "I think the visit today in this company in honour," it said, paused and then tried again: "This company having visited today of me is honourable."

Systems have improved since and once the remaining problems are solved demand will no doubt be huge. Both BT here, and AT&T in America already offer telephone translation services for business executives — AT&T in more than 140 languages — but for the moment it is not a machine but a human interpreter who sits in on the call.

'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak came out in Russian as the vodka is good, but the meat is rotten'

ONLINE

A change of tuner

THE European version of high-definition television looks like a non-starter, says Martin Bangemann, the European Community industrial commissioner. He suggests that the EC should redirect its efforts towards more modern digital systems and rescue whatever elements of the European version could be applied to these systems.

The European Commission has been fighting for more than a year to get the community to spend £700 million to promote a European standard for wide-screen, cinema-quality television.

THE clothing chain BHS has signed a data-processing contract worth more than £100 million over 11 years. Computer Sciences, which will take over the management of all BHS infotech requirements, says the deal guarantees a minimum 30 per cent saving on computing costs.

Cost cutter
THE clothing chain BHS has signed a data-processing contract worth more than £100 million over 11 years. Computer Sciences, which will take over the management of all BHS infotech requirements, says the deal guarantees a minimum 30 per cent saving on computing costs.

New view
MOST personal computers are still running the DOS operating system, but buyers are increasingly opting for the graphical software Windows, says the research firm Ovum. It predicts a strong future for Microsoft's new operating system Windows NT.

IBM sues
IBM is suing the Japanese company Kyocera for more than £100 million, alleging infringement of a patent on basic software built into personal computers. The software, contained in a semiconductor chip, is called the basic input and output system

(BIOS). Kyocera denies the charge, saying it developed its BIOS independently and will contest the issue.

Extra digit
MOST telephone numbers in Britain will change in a little over two years when an extra digit will be added after the initial 0 of area dialling codes. Describing April 16, 1995 as Phoneday, BT says it will contact communications managers about reprogramming switchboards and computers, although there is concern that some equipment may not be able to handle the extra digit.

Fax adepts
DESPITE being rather old-fashioned, there are still more than 500,000 Amstrad PCWs in Britain. Now, by adding a £230 module, it is possible to adapt them to work as fax machines, say London-based distributors Margolis.

Any old chips?
A SCHEME to provide technology aid to the Third World and British charities is looking for any unwanted IT equipment. Adrian Sharp, the organiser of the project for the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists, says: "We need all types of PCs, working or not, printers, power supplies, monitors, faxes, phones — in fact every piece of equipment you would find in an office apart from the furniture." Anyone with redundant equipment should contact Vic Bull on 0708 377795.

Virtually ready
PEOPLE will be able to walk through a virtual reality version of Newcastle upon Tyne's £180 million redevelopment of the East Quayside some years before it is completed. The project, which will use a computer system from Dimension International, will be used to show prospective tenants around "virtual buildings".

High Security Notebooks.

New Toshiba notebooks launched this week. Based on low power 486SX, T4500s feature new cordless Microsoft BallPoint Mouse; PCMCIA 2.0 slots for credit-card size expansion options; Fort Knox-like security protection plus SVGA external display driver. Morse prices from £1780. (Price subject to VAT at 12.5%)

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT PROVISION OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Commonwealth Secretariat plans to implement a new Financial Management Information System (FMIS) on 1 July 1993. The FMIS will support the introduction of programme budgeting in the Secretariat as well as commitment accounting and a system of budgetary allocation and funds control. In addition, a project tracking and costing system is planned. The Secretariat operates a Prime 50 series processor but intends to move to a UNIX platform either now or in the next two to three years.

FMIS software vendors are invited to submit expressions of interest in supplying the FMIS software and, if applicable, UNIX hardware. The key requirements are:

- * Operations under UNIX or PRIMOS with a demonstrable migration path to UNIX
- * sales, purchase and general ledgers, budget allocations/funds control, purchasing, project and time recording, and fixed assets.
- * support for organisational, program, project, and activity based costing and budgeting (ie multi-dimensional ledger capability.)
- * concurrent cash, accrual and commitment accounting
- * flexible and easy to use report generator
- * flexible interface with external systems
- * multi-currency capability
- * easily and quickly customisable.

Vendors who can offer FMIS software which meets these requirements should provide an outline of the software functionality with an emphasis on the above. Products will be shortlisted on the basis of this outline, and short-listed vendors will be asked to complete a detailed evaluation questionnaire leading to a procurement decision. Responses should be directed to: Mr Rickie Sankar at the address below. They should reach the Secretariat before close of business on Friday, 14 February 1993. Enquiries may be directed to Mr S. Vallipuram by telephone.

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NETWORK SUPPORT/RDBMS DEVELOPMENT

The Central Science Laboratory (CSL) is an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, a centre of excellence for R&D in Agriculture, Food, Crop and Environmental Protection. The Information Systems Team provides an IT service to CSL and currently has three computing professionals. 1. Higher Scientific Officer, Network support and Informatics Development at Harpenden (one post). To provide support for a network based on SUN servers, workstations and PCs and analysis and programming for informatics applications. The post calls for more than basic experience of UNIX and Informatics. DBA experience is also required and skills in 'C', macro language and spreadsheets would be an advantage. 2. Scientific Officer, Network support and Informatics Development at Harpenden and Slough (two posts). To provide some network support and to undertake ORACLE and Informatics DBA and development roles. Familiarity with both UNIX and Novell networks is desirable. Salaries ranging between £12,000 and £18,000 are available depending on skill and experience. CSL will be relocating to a single site near York in 1994/7. For an application form and further details, please contact: Mrs Bucknell, Personnel, Central Science Laboratory, London Road, Slough, SL3 7JL. Tel: (0753) 834828, ext. 400. Closing date for return of completed applications is February 12, 1993. CSL is an Equal Opportunities Employer

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1

CHANNEL 4

CHANNEL 4

6.40 Spiff and Hercules: Animation (5238308)

7.00 The Big Breakfast: Presented by Chris Evans and Gaby Roslin (96501)

9.00 You Bet Your Life: American game show (s) (82259)

9.30 Schools (265414)

12.00 The Parliament Programme: Anne Perkins with reports on the work of both Houses (62495)

12.30 Sesame Street: American early-learning series (25143) **1.30 Lingo** (TV) Children's entertainment (s) (89650)

2.00 Flint: Gabriel over the White House (1933, b/w). Intriguing political satire starring Walter Huston as a corrupt American president who is involved in an accident and becomes a changed man. Directed by Gregory La Cava (270018)

3.35 After Arthur Minnety Died: When his friend dies, a man becomes a fitness fanatic, driving his long-suffering wife to distraction (r) (5) (3682414)

6.00 Traveltalk: The history and scenery of Chile (r). (Teletext) (s) (747)

6.30 Countdown: Richard Whiteley presents another round of the words and numbers game. (Teletext) (s) (559)

7.00 Cutting Edge: The Case Business: A repeat of Monday's documentary about the problems facing the elderly who must move into homes. (Teletext) (r) (8969)

8.00 Blossom: Comedy about a teenage girl in an otherwise all-male Los Angeles household (s) (124)

9.30 Happy Days: Nostalgic American comedy series. Fonzie acquires a wife. (Teletext) (476)

10.00 Channel 4 News with Jon Snow. (Teletext) Weather (161005)

7.50 First Reaction: Karen Kristanovich on why British films are becoming more popular in the United States (706105)

8.00 In Search of Holy England: Rabbi Lionel Blue concludes his exploration of English spirituality with a look at Oxford, where he recreates his search as an insecure student in 1960 trying to make sense of his own duty and future (r). (Teletext) (5018)



At the airport: Nicola Stephenson, Clive Moore (8.30pm)

8.30 Brookside, Suburban Merseyside soap. (Teletext) (s) (7853)
9.00 Gardens Without Borders

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4.25 Waterloo (1971). R.

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May date for WBC champion

Lewis forced to defend in US as King rules

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT, IN NEW YORK

LENNOX Lewis's hopes of making the first defence of his World Boxing Council heavyweight title in England were dashed yesterday when Don King, the American promoter, won the right to stage the fight between Lewis and Tony Tucker, of the United States.

King bid \$12,160,000 just beating Lewis's backers who offered \$12,000,000. Don King's winning bid means that Lewis will have to fight the contract he had signed with HBO, the leading American cable network, and Sky television. "I will decide which TV network gets the fight," King said. "I will probably put it on pay-per-view. I can use my fighters Julio Cesar Chavez and Julian Jackson to push a promotion but I will have to think about it."

The bout will almost certainly be held in Las Vegas on April 24 or May 8. However, Lewis had one consolation. He will receive \$9,692,000 which is a record for a non-American boxer.

Lewis's manager, Frank Maloney, was disappointed that the bout would not be

coming to England but he said: "I am very happy for Lennox because it means he is the highest paid fighter ever. He'll get 50 per cent more than Riddick Bowe is getting so you can see how highly the World Boxing Council title is held."

"I am sorry that the fight won't be in London. We wanted to fight in England but the defence will take place in England after Lennox knocks out Tucker. Lennox can beat Tucker in his back yard or in his living room. Lennox is No. 1 in the world and does not duck anyone."

Tony Tucker, 33, is one of only four men to have gone the distance with Mike Tyson. He won the IBF title in 1987 by stopping James "Buster" Douglas in ten rounds in Las Vegas, but lost it two months later to Tyson. "Tyson put me in the Guinness Book of Records. I was champion for the shortest time," Tucker said. "I'm going to put Lewis in the Guinness Book of Records, too, by taking away the title he never won in the ring."

Tucker, who has a record of

only one defeat in 50 contests, disappeared from boxing after his defeat by Tyson and returned two years later to start a new career in which he has won 14 contests.

Bowe, the WBA and IBF champion, refuses to meet Lewis for the undisputed title until the British boxer renounces the WBC belt. He said: "I am not fighting for the WBC belt because it would go against all the things I've told you. Lennox wants you to believe that he has a legitimate way of saying he doesn't want to fight me. He is hiding behind that belt. He could say 'forget about the belts, it's you and me. We want to fight. Let's get it on.'"

"He is robbing Britain of a true heavyweight champion. They will say: who did you beat? When did you beat him? How did you beat him? He can't answer those questions. I can. Eventually he will wake up and say 'He is an honest man and if I want to prove I'm the best I have got to beat him.'"

Dave McAuley is sure he will soon lose the record he shares with Chris Eubank of having defended a world title a record number of times — and he is delighted (Govan Stiles writes). They have five successful defences to their credit but he predicts that his stablemate, Paul Hodgkinson, the World Boxing Council featherweight champion, will chalk up at least seven or eight.

Hodgkinson is aiming higher. He wants to defend 11 or 12 times and make the record unchallengeable before he retires in three years. The Liverpool boxer moved closer with his third successful defence, sweeping aside the challenge of Ricardo Cepeda with a non-stop barrage of punches that made the Puerto Rican's manager leap to his rescue in the fourth round at Olympia on Wednesday night.

"I knew he was a slow starter so I went for him straight from the bell and it did not take long to realise I was going to win," Hodgkinson said. He is happy to defend his title at home or abroad but is keen on the idea of meeting the No. 1 challenger, Kevin Kelley, the American, in the United States.



Eyes down: Neil Jenkins, the Welsh stand-off, practising goalkicking yesterday

Wales already celebrating record receipts

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AS ENGLAND'S players filtered their way into Cardiff yesterday to prepare for the five nations' championship game against Wales tomorrow, they were greeted by the merry tinkles of cash registers. The Welsh Rugby Union will take £1.8 million from the game, a record return for them from gate receipts and commercial contracts.

The Welsh have been unashamed about the sums. £750,000 from the gate, just over £100,000 from television rights, just under from advertising, merchandising and hospitality. When they have a successful team it should be even more, though England will hope to delay that process.

The squad trained at Wycliffe College, Stonehouse, near Gloucester yesterday before leaving for Cardiff with Geoff Cooke, the team manager, warning: "The greatest danger is that we become inhibited and allow the importance of the occasion to get to us."

Cooke said, though, that he regards the Welsh match as no more significant than any other in the championship, however much profit there may be in it for Wales.

"We believe that, as a team, we are better than Wales simply because we have demonstrated as much. Wales have still to win meaningful games," he said.

Cooke has reassessed his initial impression of England's slim championship victory over France last month. Disappointment has turned to appreciation of qual-

ities, English and French: "I think that will be borne out by their results against the other three countries and people might look at our win in a different light" he said.

At the same time he has enjoyed the success of the England A team, who beat Italy's second XV by 59-0 at Bath on Wednesday. "The commitment of the leading group of players has worked its way down," Cooke said.

"We are likely to lose three or four players from the seniors at the end of this season but we have players pushing forward from below. That's pressure of the best kind and the problem is to ensure reasonable competition for the A side, to sustain that area of development."

Wales, meanwhile, enjoyed a sharp workout at Sophia Gardens with Mike Hall, the Cardiff centre, showing no ill effects from the groin strain which forced him out of Wednesday's training.

Four of their team are from Swansea where Dick Best, the England coach, took a training session last August. "Their skill levels were very high," Best said reflectively, "and I thought we would have a hell of a game on our hands come February."

The Scotland party completed a two-hour training session at Murrayfield without any problems before setting off for Paris, where they have not won since 1969. Lock forward Andrew Reed, who has been treated for a thigh strain, was passed fit.

WRU denies cover-up on alleged payments

THE Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) yesterday denied it had attempted to hush up alleged secret payments to players to join the South African centenary tour in 1989. The South Africans recruited ten Welsh players to join their World XV, which also included representatives from Australia, Scotland, Ireland, France and England.

A report commissioned by the WRU into how the players, and six administrators, were recruited concluded that players might have been paid. But, while claiming that "at least one of the players received at

least £30,000 and others as much, or broadly comparable figures", the enquiry team, headed by Vernon Pugh QC, admitted it could not fully substantiate its suspicions.

"We did not consider that the evidence was sufficiently complete or compelling for us to find this as a certain fact," the report said.

Three of the present England team were on the tour — Jeff Probyn, Mike Teague and Peter Winterbottom — while Robert Norster, the Welsh team manager, Robert Jones, Mike Hall and Tony Clement were also involved.

Platt makes scoring return after injury

By DENNIS SHAW

THE selection problems of the England football manager, Graham Taylor, were eased slightly yesterday when David Platt declared himself available to play against San Marino in the World Cup qualifying match at Wembley on February 17.

Platt, who has missed ten matches while recovering from knee surgery, scored twice for Juventus in a game arranged specially to establish his fitness to face Anziani on Sunday.

In an 11-0 frolic against a small local club, he scored with a diving header in the opening minutes, added a second goal and declared himself fully fit after playing for the full 90 minutes. "I have stepped up my training in the past couple

of weeks and it was nice to come through a full game without any problems," he said.

The news was relayed to Taylor who will name his squad on Monday. It is expected to contain few surprises for he is determined to stay loyal to the players he has used for the previous World Cup qualifying matches. Although Alan Shearer, of Blackburn Rovers, is almost certain to be ruled out, Taylor will ignore advice to go for Mark Hateley or Mick Quinn or some other in-form goalscorer on a "one-off" basis.

His attitude is that if goals are there for the taking, then he has players already in his squad capable of scoring them.

Veteran Coghlan targets four-minute barrier

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT



Coghlan: Masters class

AS THE most famous record in British sport, Roger Bannister's sub four-minute mile was bound to attract variations on the theme. Noel Thatcher, one of Britain's Paralympic champions, is training to become the first blind man to achieve it, and tonight in New York, Eamonn Coghlan, of Ireland, hopes to lead the veteran class through the barrier.

These are encouraging days for the over-40s in sports where fitness tells. Just recently, Jimmy Connors reached the United States Open tennis semi-finals, aged 40, and George Foreman, 45, is a contender to regain the world heavyweight boxing title he last held nearly 20 years ago. Coghlan, 40, was the world

5,000 metres champion in 1983, retired in 1990 and, after a year of inactivity, pulled on his tracksuit again.

As he came to within six months of his fortieth birthday, the sub four-minute mile became Coghlan's focus. In September, he won the Princes Street Masters Mile in Edinburgh in 4min 07sec, but then suffered a hamstring injury. He lost four weeks' training, which brings us to one reason why Coghlan is finding hard at 40 something that he managed easily ten years ago.

The injury, he said yesterday, had left him pessimistic for his sub-four prospects indoors at Madison Square Garden tonight, though he promises to deliver some time this season.

Two other factors are of greater

significance in slowing down older sportsmen, according to Dr Craig Sharp, physiological consultant to the British Olympic Medical Centre and professor of sports science at Limerick University. No veteran has come within five seconds of sub-four, either indoors or out, and Sharp added: "Aerobic capacity goes down with age and one reason is that the maximum heart rate declines."

"Possibly the next most significant reason is tendon change. As one gets older, tendon becomes less elastic, so the runner gets less energy back. The Achilles tendon stores 37 per cent of the energy of the running stride."

Coghlan notes another inhibiting force. "The testosterone in your body reduces from your late twenties onwards and the lack of it prevents you from performing at the same

level," he said. Ten years after setting an indoor world record of 3min 49.78sec, Coghlan's mark still stands. Despite his recent setback, he remains determined to succeed where John Walker, the New Zealand former world record holder, has failed.

Sooner or later this winter the record will come, he says, but there seems little chance of it being witnessed in Britain, home of the original sub four-minute mile. "I would like to be invited to run in Britain but the meeting promoters do not regard masters running as serious," Coghlan said.

The chairman of the boards, as he used to be known, wins that argument. However fast the forty-somethings in Britain, the sport has been slow to acknowledge them.

ACROSS

- 7 Earth (4)
- 8 Working (2,6)
- 9 Cheer shout (6)
- 10 Stagger (6)
- 11 Subtle suggestion (4)
- 12 Attendance check (4,4)
- 15 Fearless (8)
- 16 Vessel bow (4)
- 17 Ornamental feathers (6)
- 21 Queue entertainer (6)
- 22 Swap over (6)
- 23 Plunder (4)

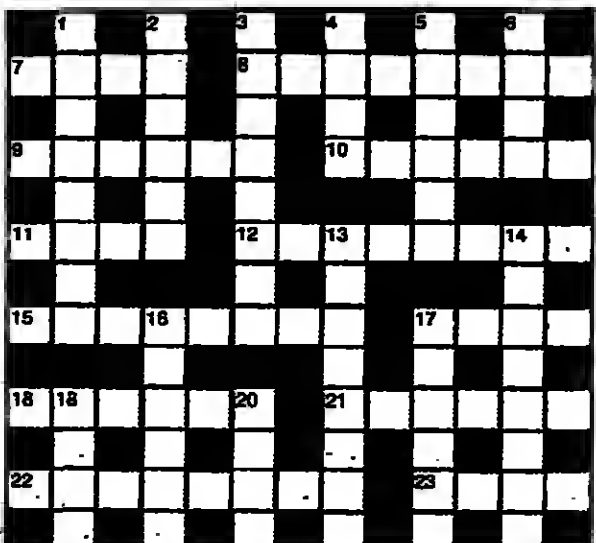
DOWN

- 1 Speech manner (8)
- 2 Bordeaux red (6)
- 3 Senior (6,2)
- 4 Section (4)
- 5 Stationary (6)
- 6 Insider (4)
- 13 Spotted beetle (8)
- 14 Animal stall (5,3)
- 16 Jog one's memory (6)
- 17 Mortar grinder (6)
- 19 Frolic (4)
- 20 Out of danger (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 3013

- ACROSS: 1 Demob 4 Idiotic 8 Mad Hatter 9 Rap 10 Sic 11 Reapient 12 Hello 15 Again 16 Perfomate 18 Bob 20 Fib 21 Throbbing 22 Liarly 23 Edges
- DOWN: 1 Dumps 2 Medical 3 Beatrix Potter 4 Intarz 5 Irreplaceable 6 Three 7 Capstan 12 Hopeful 14 Ambling 15 Fairly 17 Rebut 19 Bogus

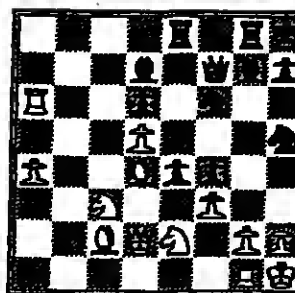
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By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Today's position is from Timman — Kasparov, Paris 1992. Here Kasparov played 1... Ng5+. Timman captured the black knight with 2 Nxe3 and after 2... Kg3 3 Qf4 went on to score a fine victory against the world champion. Why did he avoid 2 hxe3?

Solution on page 32.



By PHILIP HOWARD

- FLING
a. To beg
b. A Chinese secret society
c. To weld by electricity
- TONADILLA
a. A female toad
b. An operatic interlude
c. A savoury pancake

DOPPIE

- a. Silly, stupid, brainless
b. A grape-skin
c. A comic function of pi

MIGMA

- a. A tribal matriarch
b. An Amerindian language
c. Solid and molten rock

Answers on page 32

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